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YAHOO! INTERNET LIFE

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JULY 2001
VOLUME 7
NUMBER 7

YAHOO! INTERNET LIFE®

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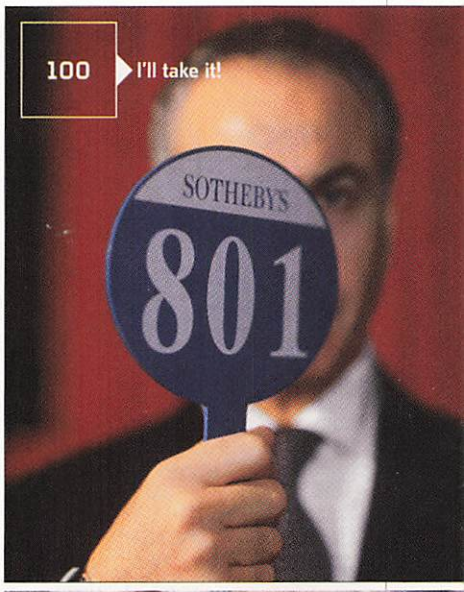

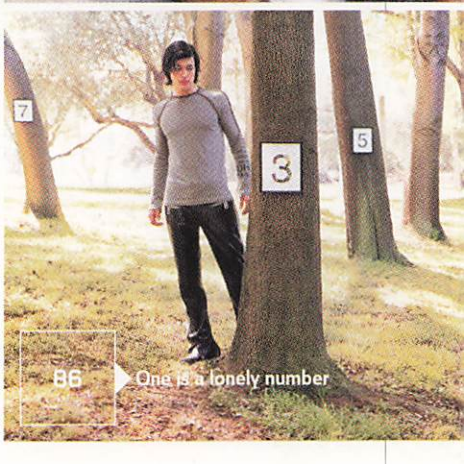

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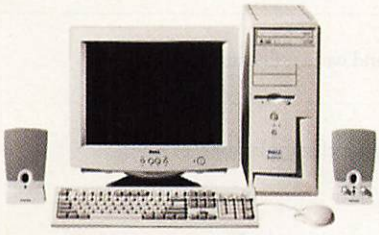

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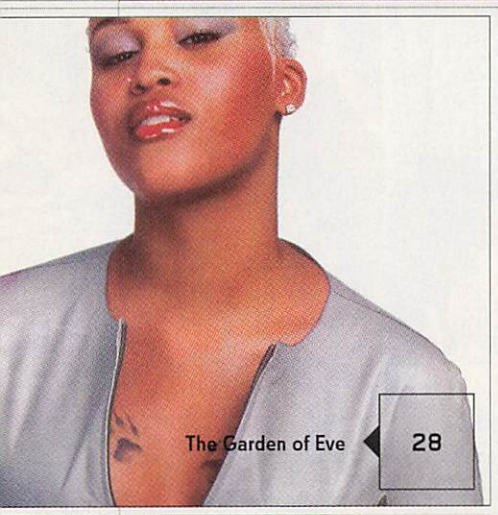

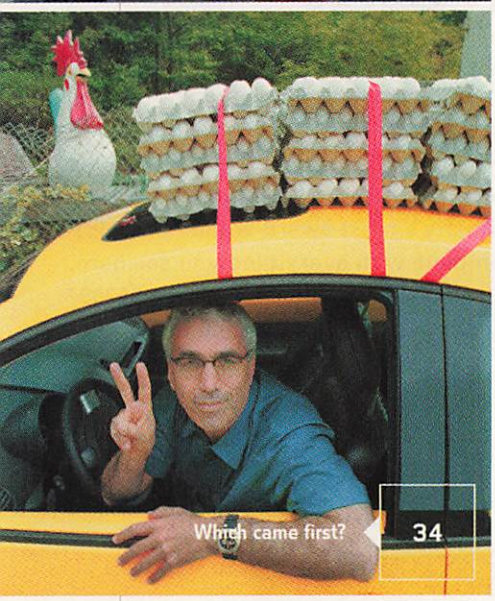

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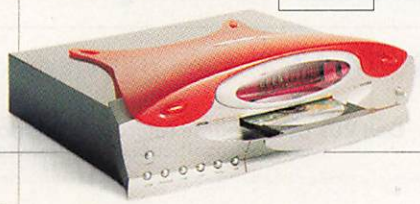

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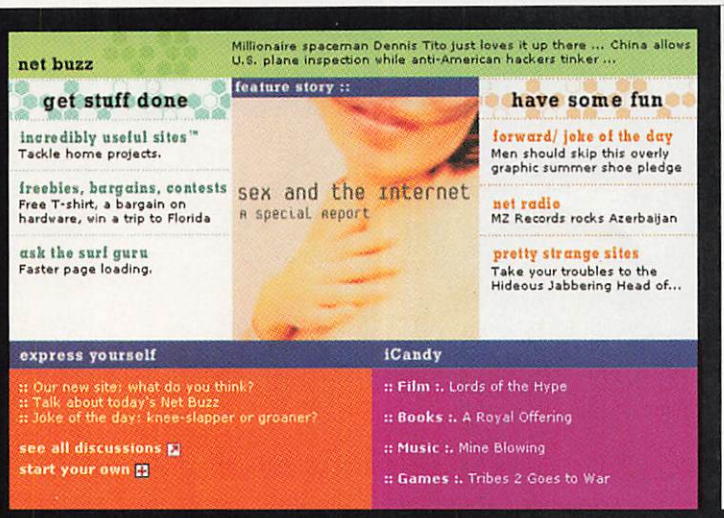

DAILY NET BUZZ ▸ Every morning, Steve Knopper scours the Web, then assembles the ultimate briefing for your day online. Whether it's the latest on an overseas crisis or vicious infighting in an 'N Sync newsgroup, Steve will point you to whatever's most relevant today. **[yil.com/buzz]**

FORWARD/JOKE OF THE DAY ▸ Supermodel wisdom. Twisted Seuss. The evil Bill Gates. Dog doggerel. The Darwin Awards. Cat poetry. Office torture ideas. Bagpipe humor. Need we say more? **[yil.com/forward]**

PRETTY STRANGE SITE OF THE DAY ▸ Cat albums. Am I All Your Base or Not? God Hates Barbers. Poke the Bunny. Your Mama. You want it weird? We make it your way, every day. **[yil.com/strange]**

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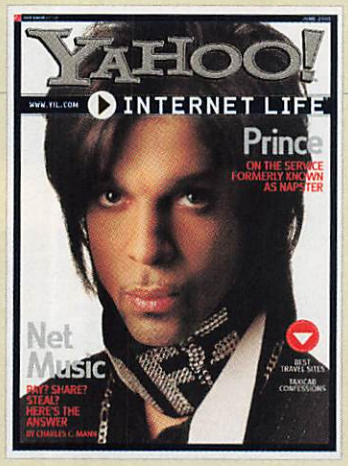
We hope you like what we've done with the place. You can let us know what you think via our shiny new community area, which allows you to chat with your fellow *Y-Life*rs, not to mention the team of trained howler monkeys that administers the site. Come on in, take a look around, and we'll see you online!



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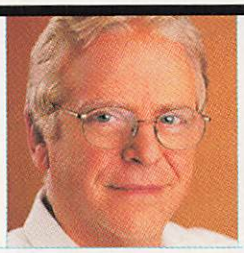

Users Keepers

IF YOU'VE CHECKED THIS SPACE IN THE PAST, YOU'LL concede that we've often cautioned against overstating the case for the Internet. This is a parallel medium, we wrote, revolutionary in its breadth, but not about to roll over everything in its path anytime soon.

Then the dot-com bubble burst, apparently from too much hot air.

Now it seems the (hot) wind is blowing the other way, and we're here again to say that that ain't so, either, Joe. To read the almost gleeful reports in the press about the latest dot-com casualties, you'd think the Internet was in acute distress. Our columnists **JON KATZ** (in April) and **ROGER EBERT** (this month) see it differently, and have been saying as much. **DOUGLAS RUSHKOFF**, the respected writer on technology and social change, goes even further in this month's cover story, "The People's Net." Rushkoff argues that the Web has never been more robust in terms of personal use, and that the dying of the dot-coms has been a healthy counterrevolution, killing off a wild overgrowth of e-commerce and bringing the Internet back to its grass roots. (Look for an exclusive excerpt next month from *Exit Strategy*, Rushkoff's forthcoming novel about the fast life in the digital lane.)

The dot-com bubble burst, apparently from too much hot air. Now it seems the (hot) wind is blowing the other way. We're here to say that ain't so

"Personal use" is a good segue to our major service package this month, the annual roundup of the Web's "50 Most Incredibly Useful Sites." We've gone with all-new choices for this year's list but made it easy for you to check on our past "classic" selections—you'll find a total of 101 sites at our Web site, **YIL.com**. You know, when I premiered the concept almost five years ago, it was kind of a *duh!* at the time—competition was much hotter for the Net's coolest sites. But today the idea of a Web site's utility, of its capacity to be interactive *and* genuinely helpful, has far more cachet. Anyone care to guess why?

When we first heard about the killing, on January 17, 2001, of an Israeli youth apparently lured to his death by a Palestinian woman he had met online, we caught *Newsweek* correspondent **JOANNA CHEN**'s reporting and asked her to follow up for us in greater depth. In the months since the boy's death, which became a sensation in the Middle East, Chen tracked the case in Israel and in occupied Palestine under stressful and sometimes dangerous conditions, getting exclusive interviews both with the victim's family and with the alleged perpetrator's former colleagues. In the process of editing what became her story for *Y-Life*, "Fatal Liaison," we asked her to double-check something at the Palestinian woman's former place of work. "It's not safe for me to go back," Chen explained simply. We agree that's a good reason to fact-check by other means, and we think you'll agree it's a compelling story.

Finally, we feature two takes on the great Net flea market: the upscale kind in "Sotheby's v. Sotheby's.com," by **GWENDA BLAIR**, and the jumping-flea kind in **MODERN HUMORIST**'s "I Am a B-a-a-ad eBayer." Have a g-o-o-od month.

X Barry Golson

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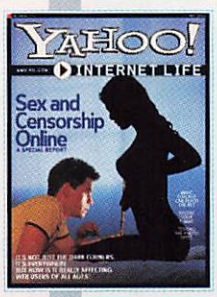

PRUDENCE ON PORN

Gary Webb's cover story on the effects of pornography ["Sex and the Internet: A Special Report," May '01, page 88] was a well-reasoned voice in a sea of hysteria on this subject. Webb was able to calmly look at the existing evidence and draw reasonable conclusions.

RON WHITTAKER
@whittaker.net

FORBIDDEN FRUIT

I'm glad that someone has finally broached the subject of sex and the easy availability of porn online. While most would argue that Internet youngsters (those 13 and under) should be shielded from sexual images, it is a gray area for our teens. Perhaps they can handle it, but should they be looking at this window to more violent and horrifying images that can damage the psyche? In the end, it will desensitize them to the violence of the world, and they may crave a more extreme high. Where will that lead?

THERESA L. VERHAALEN
@aol.com

COOL IT

I'm a 14-year-old girl, and I was casually browsing through my mom's *Y-Life* when I came across "Sex and the Internet: A Special Report." While some of the points in this article were valid, the author clearly didn't take into consideration how absolutely degrading these Web sites are to girls and women. You men need to chill out and do what you used to do: Use your imagination.

SAMANTHA ALESSI
@hotmail.com

HEALTHY REBIRTH

When I first glanced at the redesigned May '01 issue, I thought *No! Don't change it.* But after reading it several times I am impressed. I like the new Click! E-venger and Content sections, and the reliable Incredibly Useful Sites and Web User. And the new columns by Angela Gunn [Net Ethics] and Robert Scheer [Privacy Watch] were very good. And yes, I bought the magazine when I saw the cover. If anything, the topic ["Sex and the Internet"] will open up a discussion here with my teenagers about, ahem...sex. I give your magazine an A+.

MEL MACARONI
@evilbastards.com

A FAIR LOOK

Not only do I commend Gary Webb for writing an objective journalistic piece about online porn, but he did what few parents do today—take responsibility for how his children turn out.

ALEX GIASSA
@mindspring.com

IF IT AIN'T BROKE...

I just received the new issue with your new format [May '01] and I'd like a refund. Not all change is good. It's such a shame that you would try to correct something that wasn't broken in the first place.

DEBBIE FISCHER
@rochester.rr.com

FIGHTING BACK

I was disappointed by Janelle Brown's "Fight of the Month: Pruning Pussy" [Talk of the Net, May '01, page 73], regarding the controversial Web site Bonsai Kitten. As a librarian, I am an advocate of free speech. I don't dispute Brown's right to pen her column or *Y-Life*'s right to print it. I don't even dispute the creators of Bonsai Kitten's right to publish their Web site, in poor taste though it may be. What I do deplore is the light and disrespectful treatment given the Humane Society and other animal rights advocates. The entire column is slanted in a manner that pokes fun at Bonsai Kitten's objectors. Have you no idea how much of an upward struggle these groups face? How difficult it is to get most people to pay attention to animal cruelty?

TONIANN SCIME
@earthlink.net

Thanks for your comments. We certainly do applaud the efforts of the Humane Society. Nonetheless, we would rather see it chasing sadists than chastising satirists. —Ed.

RELOAD: In "Who Let the Blogs Out?" in the May '01 issue [page 108], a letter was inadvertently dropped from a site address. The correct address is **NCSA What's New [ncsa.uiuc.edu/SDG/Software/Mosaic/Docs/whats-new.html]**.

You talkin' to us? We hope so! Write to yilmail@ziffdavis.com.

SITE GAG

ODDITIES

THE WELL-ADJUSTED MUTT

The following is from a recent press release about a seminar in using chiropractic on animals.

Two parts to the seminar:

1 Lecture at a hotel – covers horse and dog adjusting methods

2 Hands-on horse adjusting seminar, conducted at a stable

Animal chiropractic "how-to" books and videos also available at our Web site. Plus, you can download a FREE horse, dog, or cat adjusting video clip at **animalchiropractic.com.**

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People, Places, and Trends on the Net >>> Edited by Ron Bel Bruno

JULY 2001

HE'S NOT THROUGH BEING COOL

SPUDS OF THE LATE '70S AND EARLY '80S know Mark Mothersbaugh as the front man for Devo. These days his production company, Mutato Muzika, scores music for Showtime's *Chris Isaak Show*. And as lead member of the Wipeouters, an ersatz surf-punk band that the lore tells us preceded Devo, he's also released *P'Twaaang!!!* on the Casual Tonalities label.

Mothersbaugh recently took a break from his busy day to chat in Mutato's West Hollywood headquarters about his fascination with Photoshop and eBay, and about being a well-paid, middle-aged musician who's not above donning that old yellow suit for cash. ▸

30 THE EGO SURF'S UP! CONTRIBUTOR JOHN GODFREY **GOOGLES HIMSELF PUBLICLY** IN AN ATTEMPT AT SELF-DISCOVERY

32 RUNNING OUT OF ROOM? LET HOME & OFFICE GUIDE YOU TO THE **WEB'S BEST FILE-STORAGE SERVICES**

36 OUR INTREPID SHOPPING EXPERT COMPARES THE WEB'S FINEST **BRAND-NAME, DISCOUNT FASHION SITES**

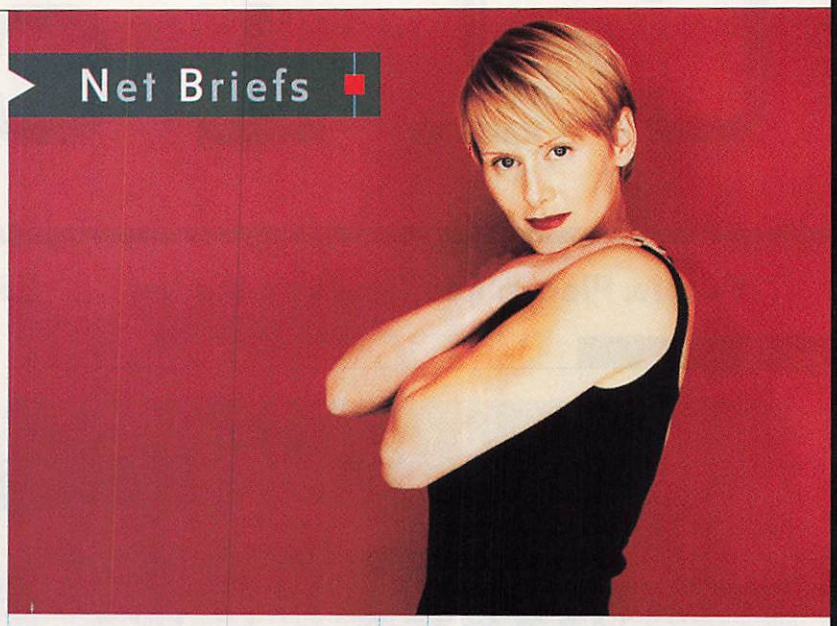
CHRIS CALLIS

Click! around the net

Y-LIFE Why is there so little online music to be found at Mutato [mutato.com]?
MOTHERSBAUGH At Devo's **clubdevo.com**, we do have some downloadable music that's only been on the Web. Just studio songs that we recorded here.
Y-LIFE You've mentioned having done some virtual collaboration with remote composers and musicians.
MOTHERSBAUGH The project was actually some [audio] restoration work on old Popeye cartoons. The budget was tight, so I found people in Iowa and recruited people from Michigan and Canada who were more than delighted to make more than they were at the 7-Eleven. Now I'm just looking for the next step, which would be to dissolve this building. Make it so it doesn't have to be here anymore.
Y-LIFE And you've used computers in general to create some visual artwork as well?
MOTHERSBAUGH I'm doing visual art every day. About a year ago, I started playing with Photoshop...and I fell in love with it, to the point where I started sleeping three hours a night. I had avoided computers because I knew what would happen.
Y-LIFE But what are you doing online?
MOTHERSBAUGH *(He lowers his voice and glances around the room nervously.)* I go to eBay...*(whispering)* auctions.
Y-LIFE Ahh. Are you a buyer or a seller?
MOTHERSBAUGH I buy lots of musical instruments. I ended up buying a calliope from Wichita, Kansas, that I then had to figure out how to get out here.
Y-LIFE Think you can tear yourself away long enough to do some Devo gigs?
MOTHERSBAUGH We actually do one-off shows. Sometimes somebody will offer us such an embarrassing amount of money that even we can't look the other way. We'll say, "Okay, we'll put on those stupid yellow suits," and we go do it. It was really great to be 20 years old and play in a band. At 30 it was Spinal Tap. And if you're still doing it when you're 40? Yuck!

FIND MORE CLICK! FAVORITE SITES AT YIL.COM/MEMORABLE

Net Briefs



NO APOLOGIES

Frosh anchor Andrea Thompson had barely made it to the CNN news desk when a Web satire site posted links to nude pix of the former *NYPD Blue* star. Video stills on at least 120 sites included scenes from *Manhattan Gigolò*, a low-budget 1986 foreign film, and an appearance on the HBO show *Arli$$*. Thompson, whose bio on **The Internet Movie Database [imdb.com]** lists her as a 41-year-old consenting adult, is not contrite about these past acting gigs. "It's all over the Internet," she says. "The thing that's so regrettable is that they've taken a 20-year acting career I'm very proud of and reduced it to a couple of nude shots." CNN stands by its hire.

HOLLYWOOD PAYS UP

Star of stage, screen...and monitor? While the Internet must still prove itself as a film and TV distribution channel, the entertainment industry is covering its bases. The Writers Guild of America reached a tentative agreement with producers to be paid for work appearing online, and the Screen Actors Guild is expected to hold out for similar provisions in its own contract negotiations. The agreement applies to Net shows offered once or for a limited time; nothing yet on how to award residuals for downloadable content.

RETURN TO SENDER

A recent Gartner survey reports that U.S. employees spend an average of 49 minutes per day managing e-mail. The study also revealed that 34 percent of the internal e-mail people get is considered "unnecessary." Think about that the next time you're sending a big fat "Me, too!" to 4,398 of your closest colleagues.

OPEN THE DOOR, ALREADY

A visit to the American Family Immigration History Center [ellisislandrecords.org] during its first weeks on the Web proved almost impossible. An estimated 10 million genealogy buffs hit the site on day one to search for the records of immigrants who entered the U.S. through Ellis Island between 1892 and 1924, and to learn more about this key American landmark. Throughout the first week, high demand locked out most who tried to enter. Meanwhile, the center itself continues to welcome millions of the world's tourists en masse every day.

THE CLICK AROUND THE NET CLIQUE: MEGAN GERRITY (NEWS), LISA RONIS (RESEARCH), JOHN GODFREY, AND JOSH ROBERTSON (HUMOR). WRITE TO CLICK AT CLICK@ZIFFDAVIS.COM

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SLAM DUNK

In a May Save! we deemed **NBA.com**, the league's streaming news site, a decent idea, adding our suggestion that the NBA include some actual Webcasts of games. Now they have. Slam dunk.

GRIM SOUND TRACK

Listening in on a Georgia execution isn't our idea of fun. However, *The Execution Tapes*, a National Public Radio documentary archived and tastefully presented by **Sound Portraits.org [soundportraits.org]**, reminds those on both sides of the debate that the death penalty isn't just an abstract topic.

INDIA LINK

In India, where there are 3.5 private telephone lines for every 100 people, the government is requiring phone companies to build public telecommunications centers with broadband access. That's a connect.

Delete! ...Dubious Deeds

SPONSORED CONTAGION

Many companies have challenged hackers to try to break their security, but e-mail firewall startup GateKeeper is holding a virus-writing competition. This might just be the worst idea we've ever heard of.

CHARITY BEGINS ONLINE

On "Back the Net Day," Internet-industry newsletter Iconocast asked readers to combat "viral lack of confidence" in the Internet economy by buying products or stock from "your favorite online store." We thought it was a "viral lack of business plan" that was killing the dot-coms.

COOKIE MONSTROSITY

A year ago, President Bill Clinton decreed that U.S. government sites would no longer issue cookies. So how come 64 of them still do?

'Napster, huh? I'm still trying to figure out how to use my TiVo'

MTV'S CARSON DALY

Top of the Net

WEB TOPPERS

The most popular sites among Web surfers...*

1	YAHOO.COM**	56.6
2	MSN.COM	50.9
3	AOL.COM	36.6
4	MICROSOFT.COM	34.1
5	PASSPORT.COM	28.8

...and the top news/information sites.

1	ABOUT.COM	13.9
2	WEATHER.COM	11.3
3	MSNBC.COM	11.2
4	CNN.COM	9.6
5	CBS.COM**	5.2

*Unique visitors, in millions, during March
** Aggregated sites
Jupiter Media Metrix [jmm.com] measures the preferences of more than 60,000 surfers. Apparent ties are the result of rounding.

DOWNLOADS

The most-downloaded software titles at ZDNet Downloads [hotfiles.com].

1. **YAHOO! MESSENGER,** instant-messaging program
2. **INTERNET EXPLORER 5,** browser
3. **GO!ZILLA,** downloading tool
4. **WINMX,** file-sharing program
5. **CHEETACHAT,** chat client

Rankings reflect downloads during the week ending 4/24.

GAMES

The most popular diversions at Uproar [uproar.com].

1. **FAMILY FEUD**
2. **BINGO BLITZ**
3. **MAH JONG SOLITAIRE**
4. **BLOWOUT BINGO**
5. **PYRAMID SOLITAIRE**

Rankings reflect April traffic.

BOOKS

The top-selling hardcover fiction titles at Amazon.com.

1. **1ST TO DIE: A NOVEL,** James Patterson
2. **THE BONESETTER'S DAUGHTER,** Amy Tan
3. **THE LAST TIME THEY MET: A NOVEL,** Anita Shreve
4. **A PAINTED HOUSE,** John Grisham
5. **SCARLET FEATHER,** Maeve Binchy
6. **MY DREAM OF YOU,** Nuala O'Faolain
7. **POTSHOT,** Robert B. Parker
8. **PRODIGAL SUMMER,** Barbara Kingsolver
9. **MYSTIC RIVER,** Dennis Lehane
10. **UTHER: THE CAMULOD CHRONICLES, 7,** Jack Whyte

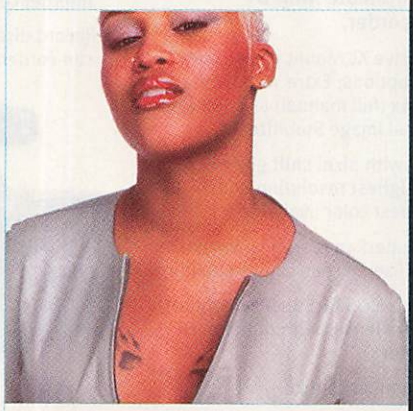
Rankings reflect sales for week ending 4/24.

netobsessions

The Girl

EVE

The rapper's second album, *Scorpion*, is drawing raves. We're betting her 30 Yahoo! clubs had a hand in the record's *Billboard* bow at No. 4. Start @ **Blonde Bomb Shell [clubs.yahoo.com/clubs/blondebombshell]**



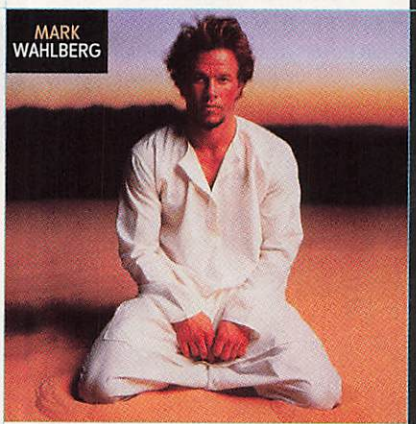
The Thing

TRUE(?) CONFESSIONS

Thanks to the Net's anonymity, airing dirty laundry is now a hobby. And the sins listed at tell-all sites – from lust to "misc." – are so amusing that it's easy to forget they're more wishful thinking than actual confession. Start @ **Not Proud [notproud.com/confessed.html]**

The Guy

MARK WAHLBERG



A starring role in *Planet of the Apes* should make audiences forget his prosthetic *Boogie Nights* costar and his rap career as Marky Mark. Start @ **MarkWahlbergFan.com**

EVE: YARIV MICHAN/CPI; WAHLBERG: MARK SELIGER/CORBIS OUTLINE

only one in 700 dogs suffers
from protein allergies.

only one pet food company
discovered this solution.

Dogs with food allergies simply cannot tolerate certain protein in their pet food. Purina® not only recognized this potentially life-threatening problem, we were the first pet food company to solve it by creating the first truly hypoallergenic diet where the protein is broken down. Through this discovery, Purina scientists have found a way to end a dog's allergic reaction. When PURINA SCIENCE is working this hard to improve life for one out of 700 dogs, imagine what we're doing for all the rest.

PURINA *Advancing Life.*™

WWW.PURINA.COM

The Witch

The Cricketer

The Poet

GETTING TO KNOW ME

YOU PROBABLY THINK THAT PAGE IS ABOUT YOU, DON'T YOU?

Privacy online? It's a worthwhile concern when talking about credit card transactions and bank account data. But what if you'd *like* to be sought and found online? Don't scoff: If the *Jerry Springer Show* is any indication, many of us will do almost anything for our 15 minutes.

Even if you're not ready to tell America that you slept with your dad's stepsister in the back of his El Camino, you can still be famous on the Net. Search engines like **Google [google.com]** let us track how we (or even those near and dear) stack up against the rest of the world:

My first crush: 1,319 hits

The guy she wound up with: 954 hits

Me: 4,570 hits. Oh, yes!

Believe it or not, such a vanity search (aka "Googling") causes neither hairy palms nor blindness. But what if you get few or no hits? Well, you're quite possibly a nobody. Thousands of returns? Congratulations, you may just matter. Establishing your social value has never been easier. Who needs therapy?

ME, MYSELF...AND THEM

My "John Godfrey" search on Google starts with my clicking the "I'm Feeling Lucky" button, your ticket to the most relevant site for a given search term. Welcome to the John Godfrey Web Site, a Canadian politician's home page. That's not me.

The standard Google Search button returns 6,220 page hits—not for this man Godfrey, mind you, but for other "JGs": a half-dozen published author/poets, a decorated World War II fighter pilot, a popular cricket player, and my personal favorite, a 17th-century Massachusetts witch—yes, witch.

After adding some good keywords, I eventually surfaced—on the UC–San Diego theater alumni page, and as the author of a *Les Misérables* review, circa 1991. That's great, but how is that beautiful brunette at the bar to know that *"John Godfrey" AND theater AND "San Diego"* is the ticket to finding *this* Godfrey, unless I manage to work that into the introductory conversation. Note to self....

POWER NARCISSISM

Google is a great search tool, but it's not really a digital bread-crumb trail. EgoSurf, on the other hand, is. Or *was.* The site—defunct since spring—scoured the Web and e-mailed search results to Hansel, Gretel, and everyone else who wanted a glimpse of their cyberself. At its peak, EgoSurf received around 2 million impressions per month, which is comforting: I'm not the only needy Netizen out there.

But even with EgoSurf gone, don't give up. Try a customized query at **Lexis-Nexis by Credit Card: Available Products [web.lexis.com/xchange/ccsubs/cc_prods.asp]**. Though the database giant is known for its budget-busting information services, the largely B2B site does offer plans starting at $1 per document. Its records include thousands of newspapers and magazines unavailable on the free Web, as well as public records such as lien filings and mortgage records.

The results are exhaustive but not always pleasing. Amid those innocuous hometown clippings is the purchase price of my house, its assessed land value, and—oh, yeah—my home address. And my cursory inspection of the "Combined Criminal and Civil Filings" database shows that an embarrassing incident from my distant past isn't so distant. You want more? My attorney advises me against it.

Okay, maybe I don't want to experience Net fame after all. In fact, take my advice and do what I'm doing—looking for that *Battlestar Galactica* lunch box of my dreams on eBay. And please, do me a favor: no searches like *"John Godfrey" AND lewd,* agreed?

JOHN GODFREY

BOBBY NEEL ADAMS; STYLIST: ALYCIA BELLE GARRIGAN; HAIR AND MAKEUP: REBECCA SOMMER

Presenting the all-new Mercury Mountaineer. With an available 4.6-liter, 239-hp V-8, and precision-tuned, independent rear suspension, it can readily accommodate just about any type of terrain that comes your way. No matter how demanding. Including those canyons, peaks and valleys most of us refer to as—around town.

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Mercury

PUT THE WEB TO WORK (AND GIVE YOURSELF A BREAK)

SAFEKEEPING

TRY ONLINE STORAGE – IT'S LIKE HAVING YOUR OWN HARD DRIVE IN THE SKY

Imagine losing your entire MP3 collection, photo gallery, and novel-in-progress all in a few terrible seconds. That's what's called a hard-drive crash: Pray you never experience one firsthand. The most common inoculation is saving to an external device, like an Iomega or SyQuest drive, but this fix has its problems. What if a thief breaks in and takes your computer equipment? What if a fire or a plumbing leak ruins your workroom?

Backing up to a Web storage site makes sense for safeguarding your most important documents, and it's a convenient way to move big files from computer to computer or to share them among friends. We surveyed four major players and found a narrow range in prices and services. Some make money selling lots of additional space, while others ask you to view ads or get your friends to sign up. **TROY DREIER**

SITE	FREE SPACE?	ADDITIONAL SPACE?	EXTRA FEATURES	WIRELESS ACCESS?	PLATFORM
FREEDRIVE (FREEDRIVE.COM)	Yes, 20MB	Yes, for paying subscribers only	Photo album, CD creation	Yes, for paying subscribers	Win (Mac, later this year)
IDRIVE (IDRIVE.COM)	Yes, 50MB	No	Web clipping	No	Win, Mac
MYSPACE (MYSPACE.COM)	Yes, 25–300MB*	Yes, as reward for referrals (limitless)	Web clipping, CD creation	No	Win, Mac
XDRIVE (XDRIVE.COM)	No; $4.95/mo. for 25MB	Earn up to 100MB by making referrals	Save files in one step	Yes, for paying subscribers	Win

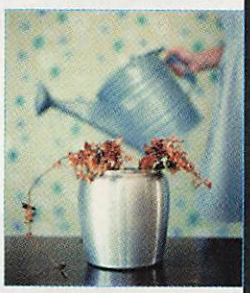
*The more personal info you supply, the more space you get.

netsavers

Add-On Charges

SAVE TIME SAVE MONEY

Batteries are a little like houseplants: They're all around your home, and most of them are dead or dying. That isn't good news for your flashlights, smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, and alarm clocks. Stock up at **Batteries.com**, a no-nonsense store that carries every kind of battery you've ever heard of, be it disposable, rechargeable, or even specially designed for invisible-fence dog collars. You can buy batteries in bulk, or look for an extra one to carry with your notebook PC. Cameras, cell phones, hearing aids, and watches are all covered. Confused? Check the amazingly extensive battery glossary to help you figure out whether lithium ion or manganese dioxide is the better way to go. You won't be shocked by the site's shipping cost, either. It's just 99 cents for standard delivery.

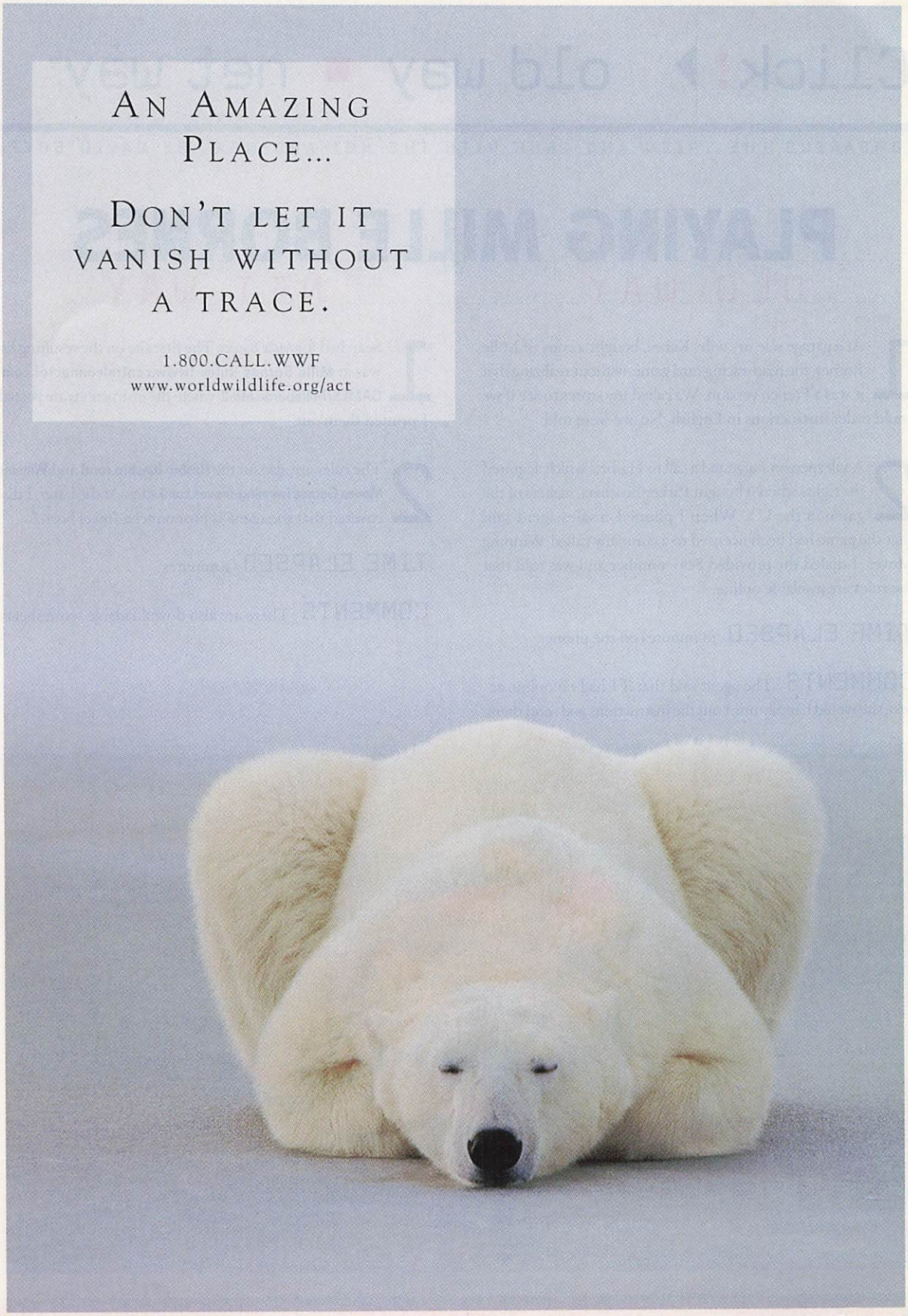


They Do Windows

SAVE TIME

You may not need a quarter million people to help you with your daily chores, but it's nice to know they're available if you do. **WeServeHomes.com** is a single source for household help from 11 large ServiceMaster-owned companies, including Furniture Medic, Merry Maids, Rescue Rooter, SecurityLink, Terminix pest control, and TruGreen ChemLawn. You get the convenience of one-stop shopping (and billing) and a single guarantee for whatever you need to get done around the house, and you can reschedule or follow up by phone. Look for bargains on recurring services such as cleaning and lawn care. And if you want to combat laziness and learn how to do a few things for yourself, explore the Tips and Tools sections. **DON WILLMOTT**

LIBRARY: ECHOS/NONSTOCK; PLANT: ANGELA WYANT/STONE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NORBERT ROSING

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WWF

COMPARING THE TRIED-AND-TRUE WITH THE NET-AND-NEW BY DAVID SHEFF

PLAYING MILLE BORNES

OLD WAY

1 At a garage sale my wife, Karen, bought a copy of Mille Bornes, the road-racing card game, without realizing that it was a French version. We called toy stores to see if we could order instructions in English. No, we were told.

2 A salesperson suggested a call to Hasbro, which acquired the rights when it bought Parker Brothers, makers of the game in the U.S. When I phoned, a sales agent said that the game had been licensed to a company called Winning Moves. I dialed the provided 800-number and was told that the rules are available online.

TIME ELAPSED 18 minutes on the phone

COMMENTS The agent said that if I had no online access, she would happily print out the instructions and send them.

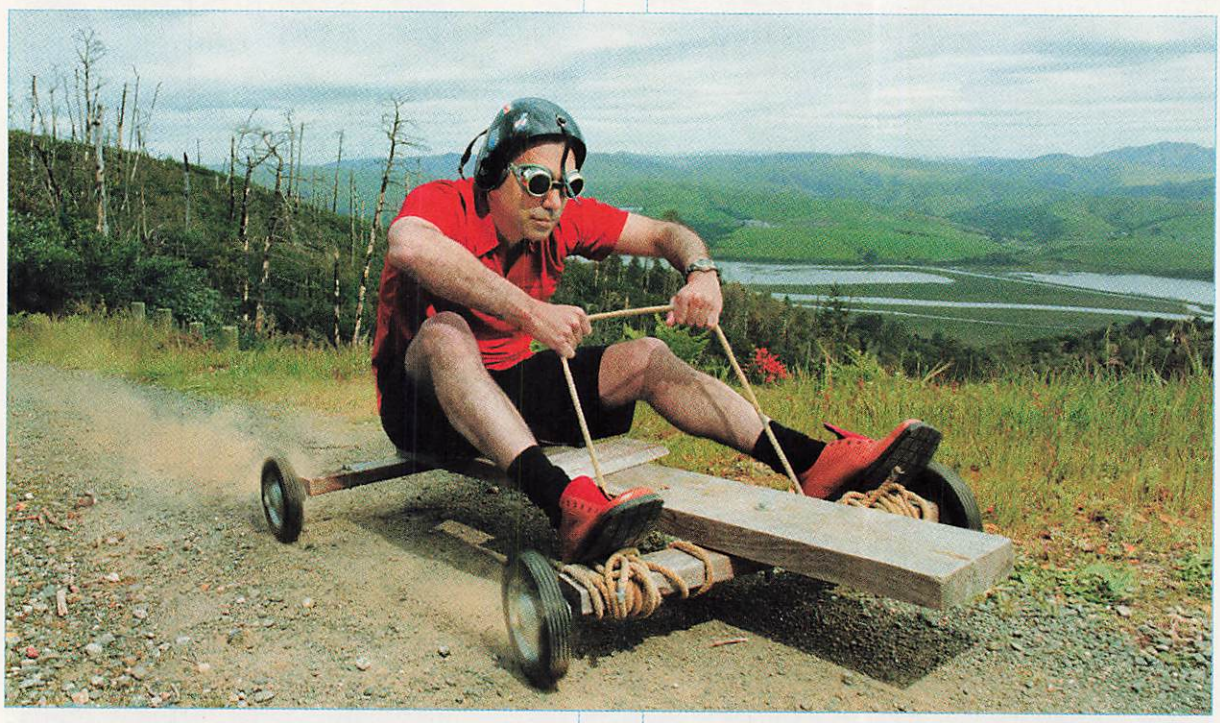
NET WAY

1 Searched for *Mille Bornes.* The first site on the resulting list was at **Mille Bornes Rules [www.centralconnector.com/GAMES/Milleborne.html]**, where the instructions are posted. I printed them out.

2 The rules are also on the **Hasbro [hasbro.com]** and **Winning Moves Games [winning-moves.com]** sites. At the latter, I discovered that the name is pronounced "meel born."

TIME ELAPSED 2 minutes

COMMENTS There are also downloadable score sheets.



EDEN ROBBINS; CLOTHING: KENNETHCOLE.COM

WINNER: NET WAY These days, it seems that all roads lead online.

BUYING IN QUANTITY

OLD WAY

1 Looking to stock up on staples, I braved the enormous and overwhelming local Costco warehouse outlet with a shopping list and bought Brobdingnagian packages of oatmeal, toilet paper, mustard, dishwashing liquid, laundry detergent, and AA batteries.

2 In the store, one always finds other "necessities," so I bought those, too. Among these items: a vat of ice cream and enough mesquite charcoal to roast a *Tyrannosaurus rex*.

3 Making it through the checkout line took 40 minutes. The total price: $63.18.

TIME ELAPSED 90 grueling minutes

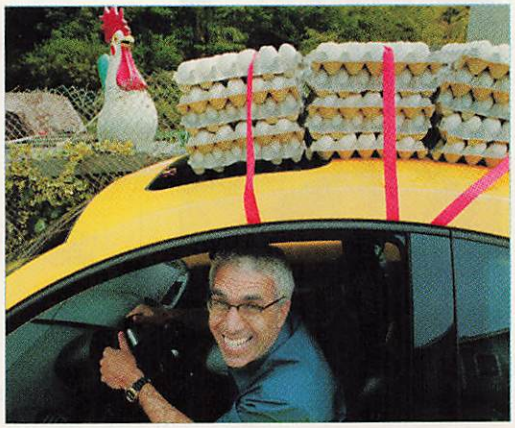
COMMENTS It wasn't particularly pleasant, but the prices are low.

NET WAY

1 Found that **YourGrocer.com** doesn't deliver in the Bay Area. That left **Costco.com**. The online version of the store had almost none of the staples on my list.

TIME ELAPSED 20 minutes

COMMENTS Check the site for appliances, cameras, and the like, but not for everyday items.



WINNER: OLD WAY **It sometimes pays to shop in person for household items.**

COMPARING PHONE CARDS

OLD WAY

1 Wanted to buy my traveling son a phone card. They're ubiquitous. I found cards in denominations of $5, $10, $20, and $50 at various machines in the grocery store and at the airport. The best deal was a $20 card good for 200 minutes of domestic long-distance calls.

TIME ELAPSED 30 minutes, including driving time

COMMENTS In the physical world, it was impractical to compare many cards.

NET WAY

1 Literally hundreds of telephone cards are available online. After comparing them myself, I checked with **Consumer Reports Online [consumerreports.org]** and learned that cards with per-minute charges of up to 10 cents provide good value. Also found out that most cards have surcharges or connection fees. "Before you buy," it says on the site, "ask the retailer and call the card's toll-free customer service number."

2 Went back to Costco.com, where the Sprint 480 Minute Prepaid Phone Card was $19.99.

TIME ELAPSED 20 minutes

COMMENTS Those hidden charges can add up fast.

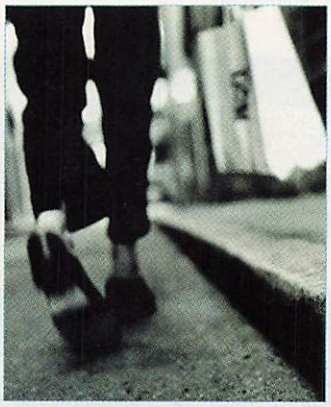
WINNER: NET WAY **Consumer Reports Online provided a shortcut. It's worth the subscription fee.**

Click! shopping

ADVICE FOR THE MALL-WEARY SURFER EDITED BY MEGAN GERRITY

The browser

MAINTAINING YOUR FINE SENSE OF STYLE – AND FISCAL RESTRAINT – IN THE POST-BOOM ECONOMY



The Rolex watch of your dreams is waiting for you – for as low as $100 – on many online auction sites. Of course, further inspection reveals that it's really a "Rolexx," and that it's just a few jewels short of authenticity. You can avoid such risky ventures with liquidation sites such as those profiled here – their discounted goods are for real. True, you *will* have to click through a fair share of XS and XXL sizes, odd colors, and last season's darlings (read: this season's disasters). But isn't it worth it when you find that Ralph Lauren or Ermenegildo Zegna sports coat for half what your spendthrift friend paid for it? Here, we report the ins and outs of high-fashion bargain sites. With any luck you'll save a trip to the outlet mall. AMANDA MYERS

Fashion by Numbers

	SMART BARGAINS (SMARTBARGAINS.COM)	OVERSTOCK.COM	BLUEFLY (BLUEFLY.COM)
YOU'LL FIND...	High-end designer goods and household names.	Well-known brands such as Anne Klein, Adidas, and High Sierra.	Dozens of designer items, from Calvin Klein to Ermenegildo Zegna.
HIS OR HERS?	Hers, with a little bit for him.	His, with some things for her.	His and hers.
FASHIONISTA FACTOR	Casual to high-end; this season's fashions mixed with last season's clearance items.	A good deal of last season's clearance.	A variety of both new and less current fashions, searchable by designer or clothing type. Run the cursor over an item for available sizes.
WE FOUND...	A $425 Kenneth Cole lambskin hipster jacket is $239.99. A $260 ladies' two-piece Max Studio suit is $130.	A Timberland short-sleeve Hawaiian shirt, originally $52, for $23.29.	A $220 Nicole Miller dress for $63; a $75 pair of Ben Sherman striped sneakers for $29.95 – a 60 percent savings.
CAVEATS (aka "*What* color are my parachute pants?")	Its $99 leather pants are a deal – in light blue or gold.	Fewer big labels; bigger discounts. Availability can be limited.	Said dress comes in "pistachio"; the Ben Sherman sneakers are available in sizes 7 and 8 only.

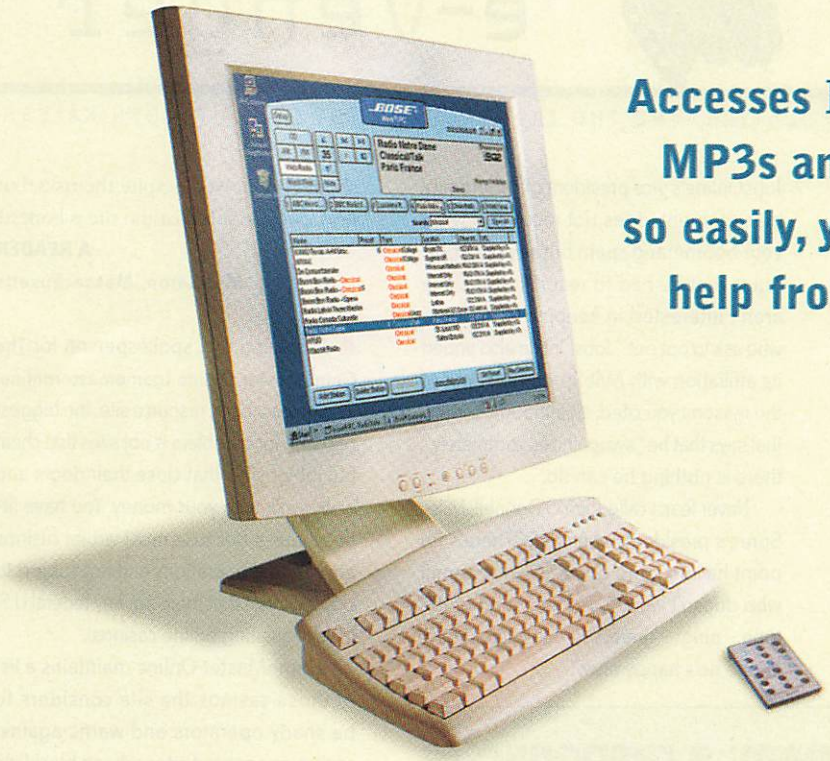
Tools

Shopping assistance from product-info site **BarPoint.com** now beams to Web-enabled digital phones such as those from Ericsson, Motorola, and Nokia SMS. Type in a product's UPC number or a keyword to get price comparisons, features, and, in some cases, reviews for books, movies, music, computers, and office products.

I can buy what...?

You don't have to live in a one-horse town or off the New Jersey Turnpike to soak up some diner atmosphere. **Diner-Mite Diners [dinermite.com]** sells brand-new stainless-steel diners to anyone with a plot of land and a yen for slinging hash. Models range from the economical SilverStar 40-seater ($149,500) to a 160-seat megamodel ($719,500).

SHOPPER: DWIGHT ESCHLIMAN/GETTYONE



Accesses Internet radio, MP3s and stored CDs so easily, you won't need help from your kids.

Introducing the Wave/PC™ system. A revolutionary new product from Bose®.

You don't have to be young to make the most of your PC's musical capabilities. Because now there's the Wave/PC system. It doesn't matter if you're 7 or 70, the Wave/PC makes it easy for you to go from Web radio to MP3s to stored CDs at the touch of a button.

Access thousands of Net-streamed radio stations.

You can listen to Web radio stations from around the world with the Wave/PC system. Its search feature lets you find the music you want quickly and easily. You can also download MP3 files through the Web and store them on your hard drive for later playback.

Store and organize your CDs on your PC.

Record your CDs on your hard drive, so all your music is easy to access. Never suffer through those songs on a CD you don't want to listen to again. The Wave/PC system lets you select your favorite songs and then file them on your PC. You can even make compilations of your favorite songs from different CDs.

System Includes:
Software
Audio Unit
Remote Control

It's as easy as using the remote.

The Wave/PC comes with a remote that lets you go from Internet radio to MP3s to your stored CDs without ever interrupting what you're doing on your PC. Access preset Internet radio stations, music files and conventional AM/FM radio. With just a simple click of the remote, you can enjoy all the music you want on your PC.

All this, plus Bose quality sound.

To truly enjoy the variety of music you'll have access to, you need to hear it through a great-sounding music system. That's why the Wave/PC combines the power of your computer with the high-fidelity sound of acclaimed acoustic waveguide technology. So whether you're listening to Internet radio, MP3s or your stored CDs, you'll hear all your music in rich, room-filling sound.

Priced at $449, the Wave/PC system gives you endless music variety through your PC, along with the great sound you'd expect from Bose, all at the click of a remote. It's so easy to use, you don't have to be a kid to get it.

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e-venger

YOUR CRUSADER FOR TRUTH, JUSTICE, AND THE INTERNET WAY BY LAURA FISHER KAISER

FIGHTING SPAM WITH SPAM

Q When I registered with **JobsOnline [jobsonline.com]** several months ago, I did not knowingly sign up for any newsletters, services, or anything else. Shortly thereafter, I started receiving all sorts of spam from the site and its partners. JobsOnline's Discontinue button didn't work, so I notified the webmaster, who assured me I'd be removed. I wasn't; in fact, more junk came in. I e-mailed everyone on the About Us page, including the CEO, barraging them with e-mail that said, "Remove me from your list NOW." Although I don't recommend or condone the "barrage method" except as a last resort, it *did* work—the spam has stopped, with the exception of MileMail from **MileSpree Rewards [milespree.com]**, a LinkShare partner. The Unsubscribe link doesn't work, and triggered even more junk. Can you look into this? Please don't use my real name.

SIR WILL BAR-AHJ
Cincinnati, Ohio

A The E-venger is torn between applauding your audacity and reprimanding you for clogging the pipe with recycled spam. It's hard to say whether your eventual delisting was the result of the barrage method or not. Around the time you launched your counterattack, JobsOnline gained a new president, severed its relationship with LinkShare, and reconfigured the site to make the opt-out policy obvious. Lee Rosenthal, JobsOnline's vice president of community management, does not recall receiving your boomerang spam but says, "I apologize that he had to resort to that. We aren't interested in keeping people on who ask to opt out." JobsOnline also ended its affiliation with MileSpree for some of the reasons you cited, so although Rosenthal says that he "sympathizes completely," there is nothing he can do.

Never fear: I called Jim O'Donnell, MileSpree's president, who said, "There's no point having someone receiving e-mail who doesn't want it. At the sound of the tone – ping! – there, I've deactivated him. I hope he's happy now."

'Never reply to spam; a response signals spammers that they have a live one, and some direct-marketing lackey gets a gold star'
THE E-VENGER

If only we all could get off spam lists so easily. Most ISPs have protocols for reporting spam; be sure to provide *full* headers from the messages to help track their origins. Never reply to spam; whether polite or vitriolic, a response signals spammers that they have a live one, and some direct-marketing lackey gets a gold star.

The Direct Marketing Association offers a way to help spam-proof your mailbox. Go to **The DMA's E-mail Preference Service [e-mps.org/en]** to have its more than 4,500 member companies "clean" you from their lists. Unfortunately, however, nothing may stanch the deluge of spam from porn and get-rich-quick sites.

LOOKING TO GET LUCKY

Q I read with interest Barry Golson's piece on gambling [Editor's Note, March '01, page 18]. I agree that online gambling should be allowed despite the risks, but how can I be sure a casino site is honest?

A READER
Middleton, Massachusetts

A According to a spokesperson for **The GameMaster Online [gamemasteronline.com]**, a gambling resource site, the biggest problem for gamblers is not sites that cheat but rather sites that close their doors and walk away with your money. You have little recourse because most virtual casinos are offshore operations and not subject to U.S. laws (not that there *are* any federal U.S. laws regulating online casinos).

GameMaster Online maintains a list of those casinos the site considers to be shady operators and warns against casino-sponsored sites whose blacklists contain only names of competitors. And check out message boards devoted to gambling sites such as the one run by **Casinomeister [casinomeister.com]**, which also maintains a list of rogue casinos, and **WinnerOnline.com**.

Should you run into an unscrupulous site, you can lodge a complaint with the **IGC: Interactive Gaming Council [igcouncil.org]**. Another site, the **Online Players Association [onlineplayersassociation.com]**, also mediates disputes between gamblers and Internet casinos.

Victim of an online transaction gone awry? Ask E-venger for help at www.yil.com/evenger.

AUCTION WOES

According to the National Consumers League [nclnet.org], an estimated 35.6 million Americans have participated in online auctions. However, 41 percent of those with winning bids reported problems getting their merchandise.

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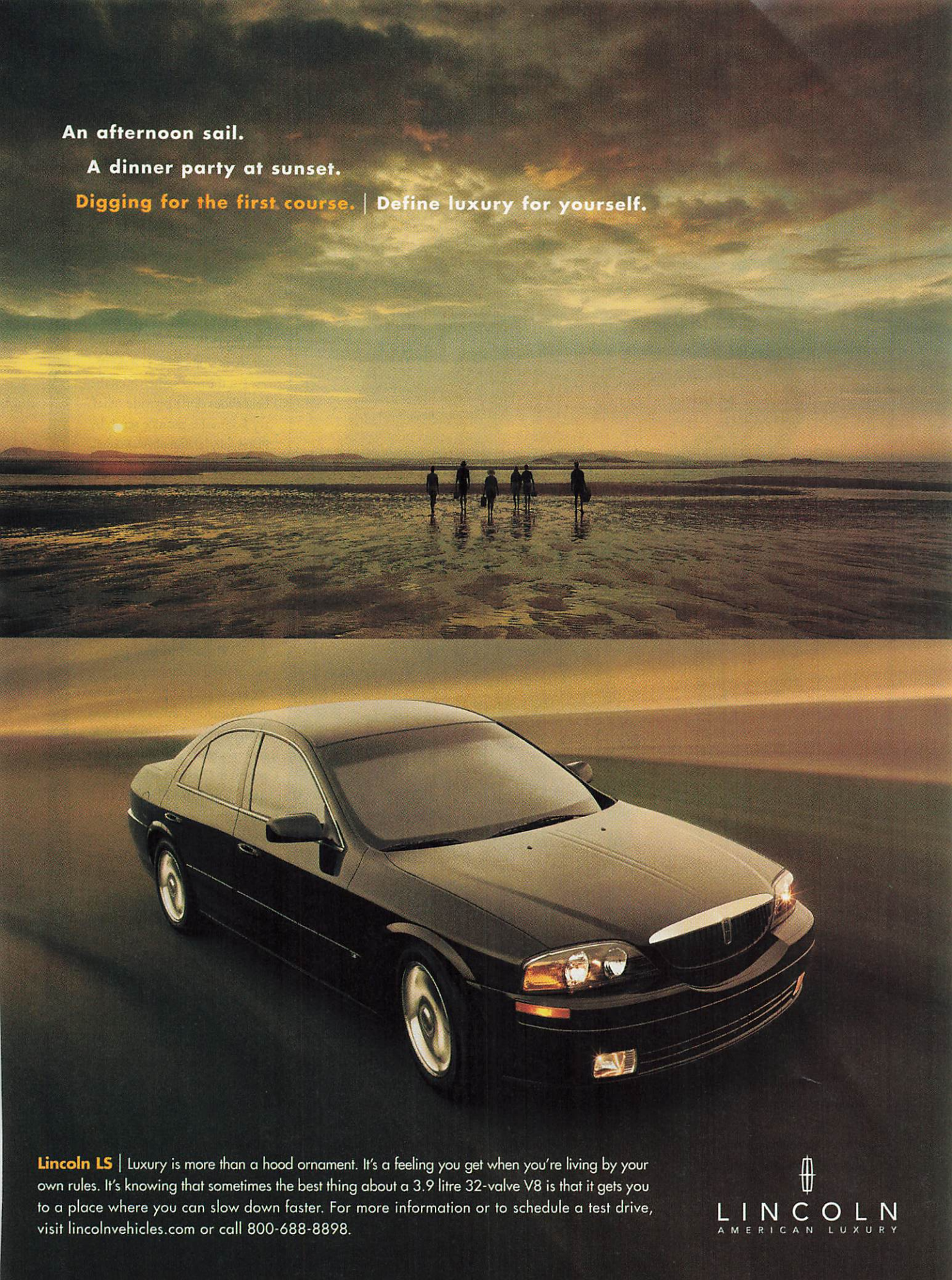
Your PDA may take care of a lot of basic needs, but it can't sear your salmon. So dive into summer the old-fashioned way and throw a barbecue. For starters, fire up **THE PERFORMER GRILL** ❮1❯, $449 **[www.weber.com]**. Keep veggies in line with a set of six **DOUBLE ROD SKEWERS** ❮2❯, $6.95 **[cooking.com]**, and treat your ribs to **STONEWALL KITCHEN'S SPICE RUB** ❮3❯, $4.95 **[stonewallkitchen.com]**. Feel a gadget craving coming on? The LED screen on the **BAR-B FORK DELUXE FOOD THERMOMETER** ❮4❯, $9.95 **[cooking.com]**, measures the heat. And when Bessie is no longer mooing, slip on the **SUEDE GRILL MITT** ❮5❯, $16 **[williams-sonoma.com]**, or use the sleek **KOSKINEN 2000 BBQ SET** ❮6❯, $150 **[tabletools.com]**. That's how savvy backyard chefs get unplugged and connected at the same time. (See page 118 for more tips on outdoor grilling.) **MEAGHAN O'NEILL**

PHOTOGRAPH BY BRIAN HAGIWARA

STYLED BY VICKY McGARRY; FOOD STYLIST: GRADY BEST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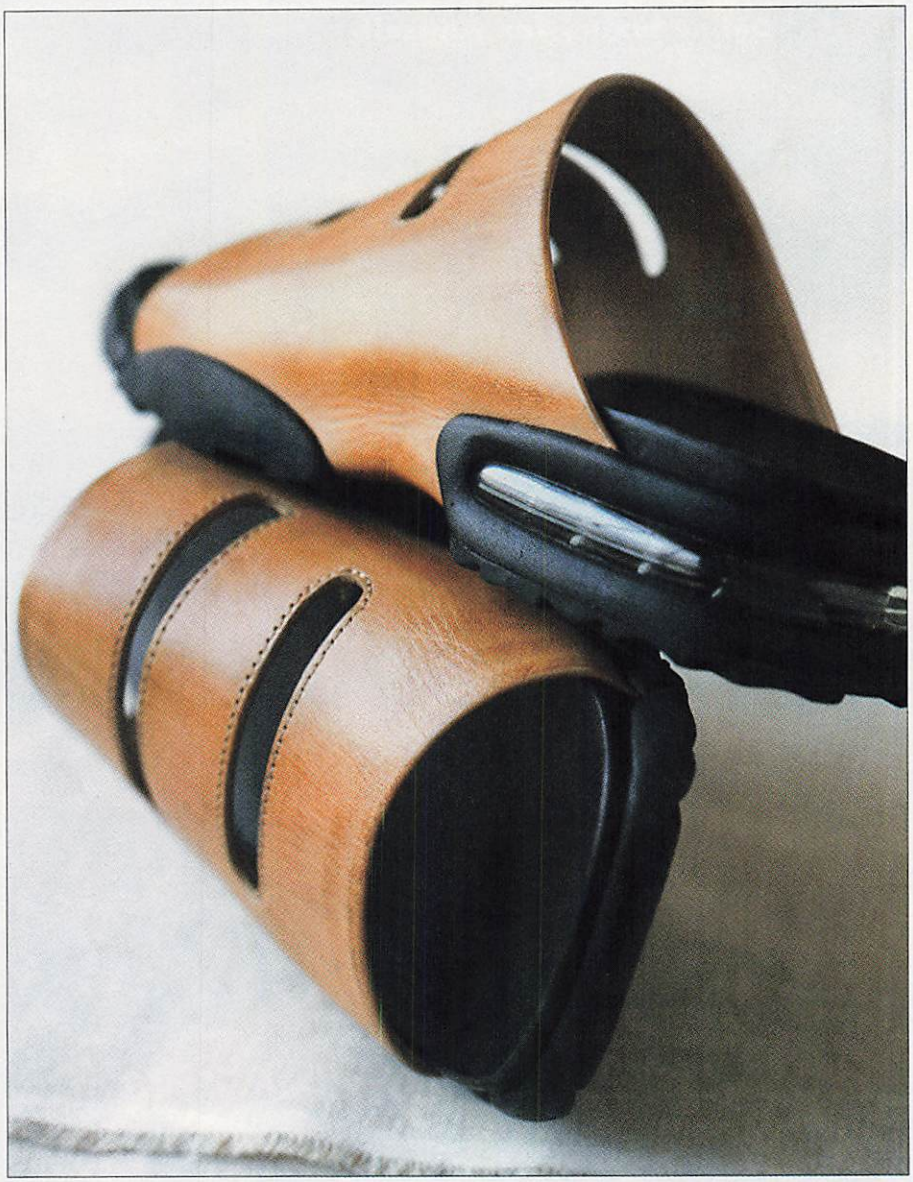


Left: Cole Haan sandal with Nike Air technology, $150.

If the Shoe Fits

Q» My job literally keeps me on my toes. Even with an all-in-one digi-gadget, my feet ache from walking. What's the latest in footwear technology?

A» Many shoes by **Cole Haan [www.colehaan.com]** use Nike Air technology, which combines the cushioning of a sneaker sole with the looks of a dressier shoe or sandal. Comfort-obsessed shoemaker **Rockport [rockport.com]** doesn't push any technological envelopes, but once you've worn one of its designs, you won't care. According to its Web site, an average person may walk 115,000 miles in his life—that's almost five stretches around the world. The site can also outfit you with the right shoe for your never-ending trek. Just search the manufacturer's dress and casual lines for work-appropriate designs.

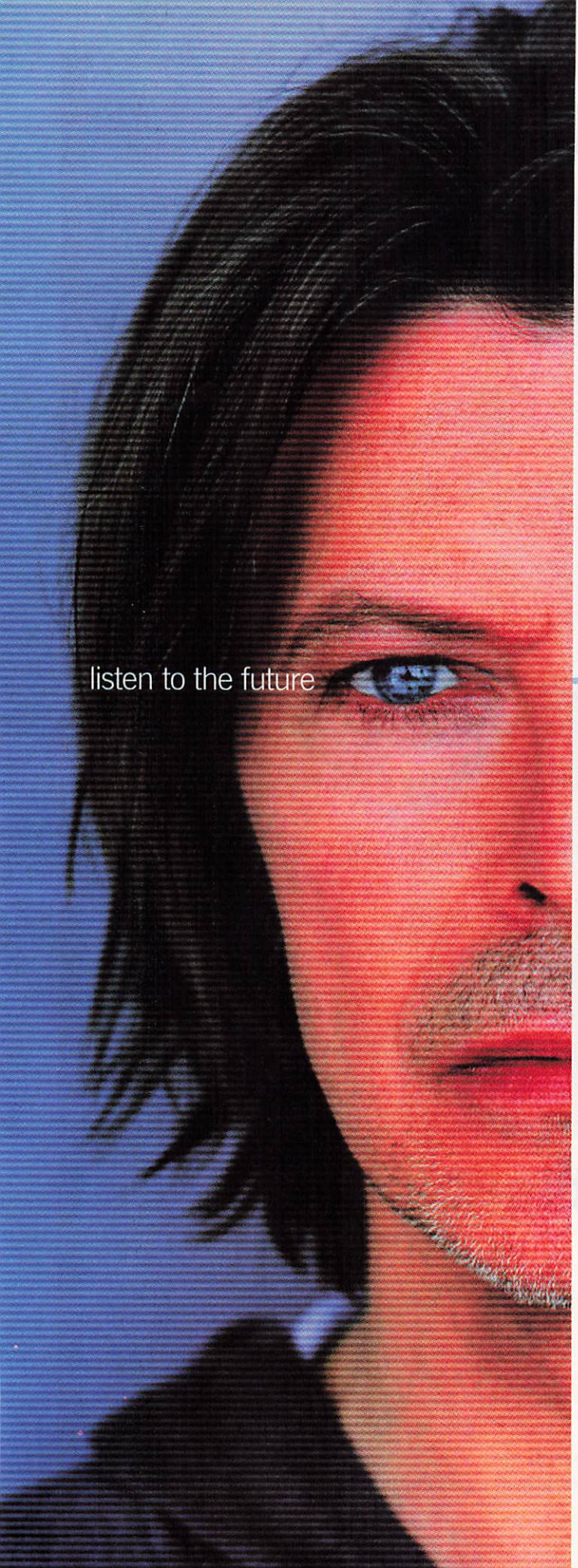
For the times when even the best shoes don't provide relief, try Footnotes pumice scrub by **Philosophy [philosophystore.com]**; it's a quick fix to bring tired soles back to life.

Q» I recently upgraded to a PowerBook G4, and it's begging for a new computer case. Do you know of one that's sleek enough to match the newest technology?

A» When major fashion labels started making laptop bags, we knew geek chic was here to stay. With form-follows-function design, several cases are made to carry your equipment and accent it. **Coach [coach.com]** Express On-Line Brief, $448, a paradigm of organization, is practically a traveling desk. Louis Vuitton, which shouts luxury more loudly than a WAV file, offers an irresistible selection; my favorite is the Taiga Tura Computer Bag, $1,090, from **eLuxury [eluxury.com]**, because even the chic have to work. Looking for high style and a minimum of flash? The ergonomic pleasers at **Kenneth Cole [kennethcole.com]** will take the stress off your back—too bad they can't fix a sticky mouse as well.

Warren Christopher is ready to help. Write to askwarren@ziffdavis.com.

PHOTOGRAPH BY BEATRIZ DA COSTA



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3 » SHORTS CIRCUIT
Surfing in your Aeron chair doesn't require special clothing, but riding a longboard does. Stand out in the crowd in these orange trunks, $49.50, from Tommy Hilfiger's **Tommy.com**.

4 » TAKE A HAND
Timing is everything in life, no matter what you do. The water-resistant Matador, $90, from **Swatch [swatch.com]**, won't stop, even when your DSL service does. **MEAGHAN O'NEILL**

PHOTOGRAPHS BY DAVIES+STARR

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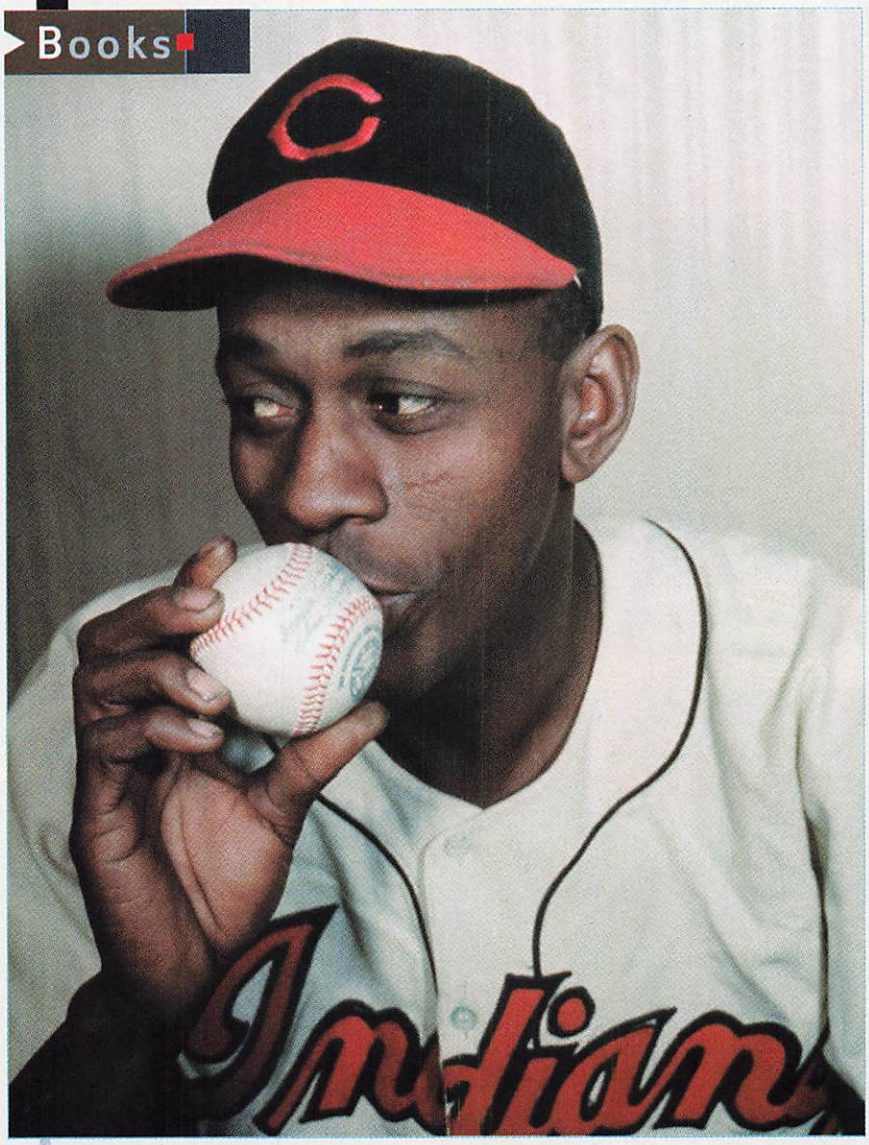
Books



PAIGE TURNER

A hypertext history of the Negro Baseball Leagues

SAY THIS MUCH FOR LES STANDIFORD'S NEW NOVELLA, *OPENING DAY – OR, THE RETURN OF SATCHEL PAIGE:* As an e-book reading experience it keeps you busy and diverted. Its pages are full of evocative old photographs of players from the Negro Baseball Leagues, and it offers hypertext that you can click on to learn about great players like Walter Fenner "Buck" Leonard, Norman "Turkey" Stearns, and, of course, Jackie Robinson, Larry Doby, and "Luscious Luke" Easter, the first African American players to break into the white major leagues. You can also

CHECK IT OUT GO TO YIL.COM/CRITICS FOR MORE INFO

Book Short

THE BITTER WELLS DUDE ON THE SWEETWATER by Douglas Kalbaugh That typical Western title is a fair preview of this pulpy cowpoke adventure, which remains true to white-hat/black-hat archetypes of the Wild West, with a bit more sex and violence thrown in. But the book's refreshing (if perhaps not entirely intentional) sense of humor, and the author's eschewing of the classic hard-bitten frontier hero in favor of a naive Eastern dandy, make for a surprisingly satisfying story. Kalbaugh may not be the next Louis L'Amour, but *The Dude* turns in a mighty fun read. L.A. ★★★ **[jacobytebooks.com] ($5.10 to download, $8.10 on CD, $5.60 on floppy, $10.15 in print)**

Film Shorts

RAZOR'S EDGE A squirmy customer tries the patience of his loquacious barber in this witty, well-acted short, which touches on '50s-era Red-baiting and UFO hysteria over the course of what is essentially an engaging 10-minute monologue. Swiss director Lorenzo Benedick makes superb use of a single location, creating a sense of mystery in the commonplace, with lingering shots of ceiling fans and straight razors. The "surprise" ending is a bit predictable, but otherwise, this accomplished crowd-pleaser is well worth a click. N.M. ★★★½ **[filmfilm.com]**

PAIGE: CORBIS BETTMANN

watch video of Leroy "Satchel" Paige, thought by many to have been the greatest pitcher ever to play the game. You can call up documentary material, including an extensive bibliography, on Negro League Baseball. You can even order a paperback copy of *Opening Day* (UREADit Media, $11.99), in case you prefer reading books in real print as opposed to on a computer monitor.

All in all, then, the book keeps you busy tapping your mouse, to the point of distracting you from Standiford's actual story. Which may be just as well, because despite the tallness of the tale it tells, it never comes close to surprising you. It's a dream of baseball glory involving one Leland "Buck" Wilson, an octogenarian who once barnstormed with Satchel Paige but now just wants to earn enough money to join the Golden Years Retirement Village and shuffleboard his way into the sunset. He signs up as a batboy with the Vero Beach Grouper of the Double-A Florida Baseball League. But wouldn't you know it, the first time he tosses a stray ball back to the infield—his first serious fling in more than 50 years—his long-ago powers come back to him.

What happens next? Suffice it to say that there are only so many things that can happen in baseball, and Standiford hasn't strayed from the obvious ones. Still, as a foundation for learning about Satchel Paige and the days when baseball was segregated, the book earns its keep. **LiveReads [livereads.com]** *($5.95)* **PAMELA H. N. HUNT**

Film

HACK MAN

Some clever snooping around Travolta's latest flick might just make you rich

WHILE JOHN TRAVOLTA TRIES TO HACK his way to $6 billion, someone watching him will try to hack a path to $50,000. But this isn't a movie we're talking about. Well, not exactly. While the plot of June's *Swordfish* has Travolta and Halle Berry coercing Hugh Jackman, a computer hacker just released from prison, into pulling off a high-tech heist, Warner Bros. is creating a real-world equivalent of sorts. Ten passwords and key codes are being leaked in various places—among them, the film's Web site, **OperationSwordfish [operationswordfish.com]**, as well as fan sites, TV spots, movie trailers, and publicity appearances—and people who find all of them can enter a contest for 50 grand at OperationSwordfish. It's an interesting convergence of online and offline marketing, and it might even make for an intriguing contest—a somewhat sparer version of the elaborate *A.I.* Web mystery (see also "A.I. & I," page 84). No doubt some of the *Swordfish* codes will be easy to find, but others will be harder to spot. Of course, somebody will probably post them all on the Net, anyway, and ruin the fun. But as they say in Hollywood, there's no such thing as bad publicity. **PAUL SEMEL**

SWORDFISH: ANDREW COOPER

THE CATCH This short tells the mysterious story of a group of boating buddies who rescue a dog (or what they think is a dog) from the open sea. The audience sees through the eyes of the beast, and if the picture flickers, the sound track thrills like good radio. The plot ain't exactly new, but with a gripping score that hints at what's just off-frame, this little thriller deserves a look. R.B. ★★★ **[hypnotic.com]**

JOHN LENNON IN NEW YORK Before being martyred by Mark David Chapman in 1980, John Lennon spent nine immensely creative years in Manhattan. **ABCNews.com** did its homework for this elaborate Webumentary, which includes video interviews with old Lennon pals like May Pang, as well as a scary dossier of FBI files. But be prepared to dig (and wait) for the good stuff. Worse, expect to be bombarded by a series of browser windows, which can make the experience seem "(Just Like) Starting Over." C.M. ★★½ **[abcnews.go.com/onair/lennon]**

THE SLIM SHADY SHOW The influence of *South Park's* gross-out gags hangs heavily over this crudely drawn cartoon series commissioned by Eminem, America's best-loved *and* most-hated rapper, and starring his alter ego, Slim Shady. Unfortunately, the series lacks *South Park's* wit and satirical bite. While these cartoons are marginally less offensive than the rapper's worst lyrics, they're also far less funny than his best. S.E. ★ **[slimshadyworld.com]**

MON **FEMME FATALE:** 9 P.M. INDIE RADIO FOR THE LADIES **[FEMMEFATALE.NU]**

TUE ***ALL MY CHILDREN* FANS CHAT:** 9:15 P.M. WIN *AMC* TRADING CARDS **[ALLMYCHILDREN.ABOUT.COM/TVRADIO/ALLMYCHILDREN/MPCHAT.HTM]**

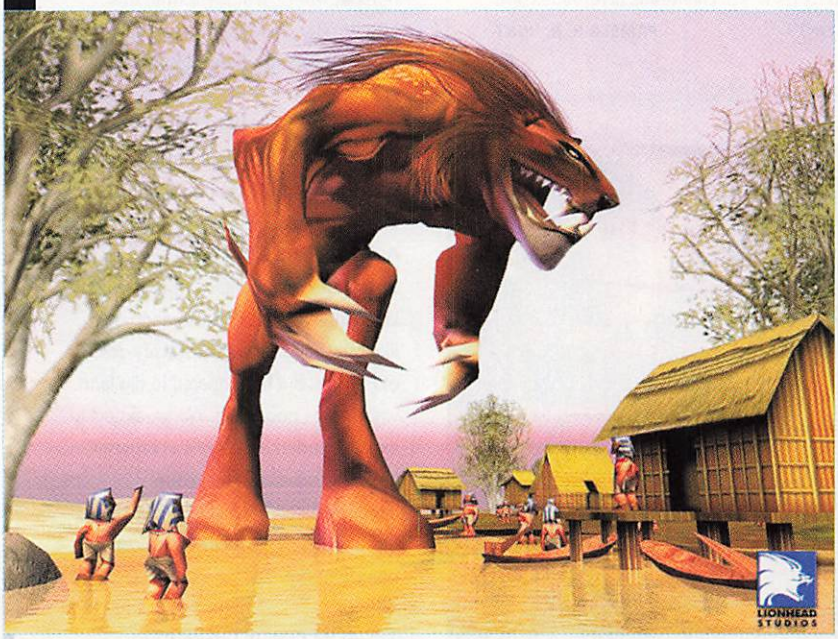
Games

GOD COMPLEX

Be a deity unto yourself with Black & White

IF ANY GAME DESIGNER IN THE INDUSTRY'S QUARTER-CENTURY HISTORY UNDERSTANDS HOW TO make God games, it's Peter Molyneux. Ever played Magic Carpet? Theme Park? Dungeon Keeper? Exactly. Black & White is his most ambitious epic to date, allowing PC players to rule over a kingdom called Eden as either a benevolent or malevolent deity who chooses, trains, and nurtures one of 14 unique creatures to do his bidding. Through more than 400 adventures and mini-quests, the minions grow to be monstrous, learn magic, and encounter other creatures to decide who will reign supreme. There's also an optional "Skirmish Mode," solely dedicated to pitting two to four creatures against one another.

The graphics in the game are astounding: Players can zoom in so close that they can stare into their creature's tired eyes, or zoom out and up to see the entire island through the clouds in one seamless fell swoop. Also, players can pick up an individual item (such as an uprooted tree, boulder, or pig) and toss it, watching as real physics and gravity guide it. Other pieces of eye candy include colorful



lighting effects (especially when casting spells), real-time day-to-night transitions, and varying weather conditions.

Internet junkies can take the game online by registering for it at Electronic Arts' official Web site. There, players can watch their creatures clash or form clans with other players and fight as teams. They can also download new creatures into the game, or import weather that matches their actual hometown's. Another fun, odd feature lets players assign names from their e-mail address book to townspeople in the game; if a message arrives during play, the corresponding citizen walks out of his or her hut, arms waving.

Still, all is not divine with Black & White, as there are some quirky, intermittent control problems and bugs that should be reparable in a patch by the time you read this. But hey, nobody's perfect. Not even... **[bwgame.com]** ($49.99) **MARC SALTZMAN**

Game Shorts

VERADO: THE IT SECURITY GAME Games often target a niche market, but this is ridiculous. Verado, a 10MB downloadable diversion for the Windows platform, makes you an overworked, underpaid IT supervisor in charge of protecting the company's network data at any cost. Fight hackers, spammers, and corporate spies by shooting them with an assortment of office supplies – cute, but redundant after a while. M.S. ★★½ **[verado.com/forms/get_verado_game_1.shtml] (free)**

ISKETCH Similar to the board game Pictionary (or the TV game show *Win, Lose or Draw*, for that matter), iSketch is a free multiplayer Shockwave party game in which players use their mouse to draw a picture – even using colors, shapes, and a virtual spray-paint can. The other players try to guess what the object is. M.S. ★★★½ **[www.isketch.net] (SP Production, free)**

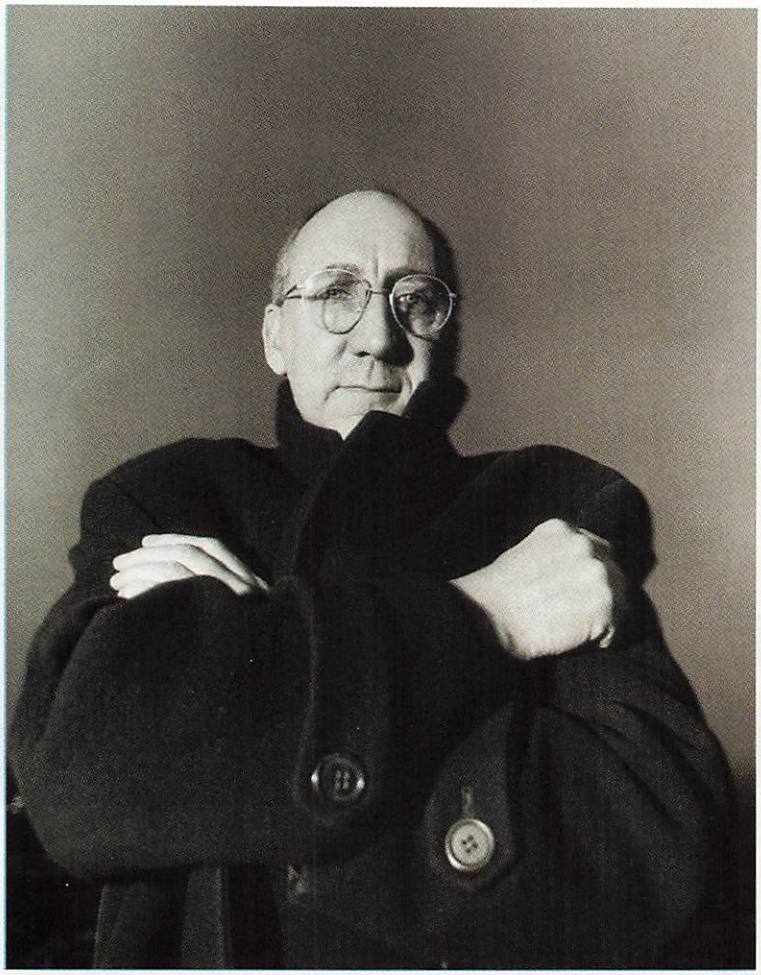
THE WRESTLING STOCK EXCHANGE Play the market – but with muscle – at this fantasy stock exchange devoted to professional wrestling. Registered players start off with 100,000 "slammers" (the official currency of the game), which are used to buy and sell shares in pro wrestlers from the WWF, WCW, ECW, and other leagues; the goal, of course, is to, er, beef up your portfolio. M.S. ★★★ **[wrestlestock.com] (free)**

Music Shorts

VINX "Don't You Talk to Me Like That" Should-be soul star Vinx is the kind of cult hero made for online connoisseurs. We dare you to be dissatisfied with this six-minute piece, in which he yearns and scats over lush synthetic atmospheres and a gorgeous hip-hop beat. Smooth jazz was never this textured. A.M. ★★★★ **[vinx.com]**

WED **MACSHOWLIVE.COM:** 9 P.M. EXPERTS AND GUESTS DISCUSS ALL THINGS APPLE **[MACSHOWLIVE.COM]**

THU **BASEBALL WITH BASEBALL WEEKLY'S BOB NIGHTENGALE:** NOON PITCH HIM YOUR QUESTIONS **[USATODAY.COM/COMMUNITY/CHAT/CHATSKED.HTM]**



Music

TO THE LIFEHOUSE

Pete Townshend's dream project appears online

LIFEHOUSE **WAS THE MYTHICAL "LOST PETE TOWNSHEND PROJECT"; THE POST-*TOMMY* CONCEPT** album and film with which he intended to take The Who—and rock—to a new level. Critics fixate on the epic's decades-early anticipation of virtual reality and the Internet. But more important to Townshend was its performance component, a kind of focus group in which music would be personalized per marathon concert-goers' input. Now the Web can put the legendary guitarist in touch with fans on something like the intimate level he once envisioned. And after decades of tinkering and setbacks, leading Webcaster MCY made him the right offer. Listeners to the resulting music and spoken word concert will experience the shock of the familiar—many songs earmarked for the endless work-in-progress wound up on interim albums. However, what comes across most memorably here is an empathetic urgency for connection between artist and audience. Host site MCY is a survival story itself, riding out the Internet bust to offer big-ticket Webcasts in alliance with old-media TV and DVD licensers. Let's hope that means Townshend's labor of love has finally found a stable home. **[www.mcy.com]**

ADAM McGOVERN

PUBLIC ENEMY "DJ Lord Uzi Scratch Live from San Francisco..."
The majors may scare off file-sharing consumers, but they'll never shut down label-hating Robin Hoods like Public Enemy. This bravura live incarnation of the rap band's "Miuzi Weighs a Ton" (off their first album) is full of the angry rhymes and delirious samples that made them such a hot topic in the first place. A.M. ★★★★
[publicenemy.com/mpe.php]

HOLEMUSIC.COM "Whole Lotta Love"
An eloquent orator against the true piracy of major-label contracts, Courtney Love puts her MP3s where her mouth is with hours of free live music and other rarities on Hole's official site. Though no label would release bootleg-blooper moments like this one (in which an irate

audience puts a swift end to Hole's cover of the classic Led Zeppelin tune), Love thankfully gets the joke. A.M. ★★½ **[hole.com]**

SHELBY LYNNE "Amazing Grace"
The AIDS-fighting Red Hot Organization soldiers on as the definitive compiler of benefit discs with music as good as its cause. In a special corner of Amazon.com, one finds numerous free exclusives, like this credible scaling of a gospel classic by one of soul royalty's more worthy pretenders. A.M. ★★★
[amazon.com/music-redhot]

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TOWNSHEND: ALASTAIR THAIN/IPG/MATRIX; HOLE: CORBIS SYGMA

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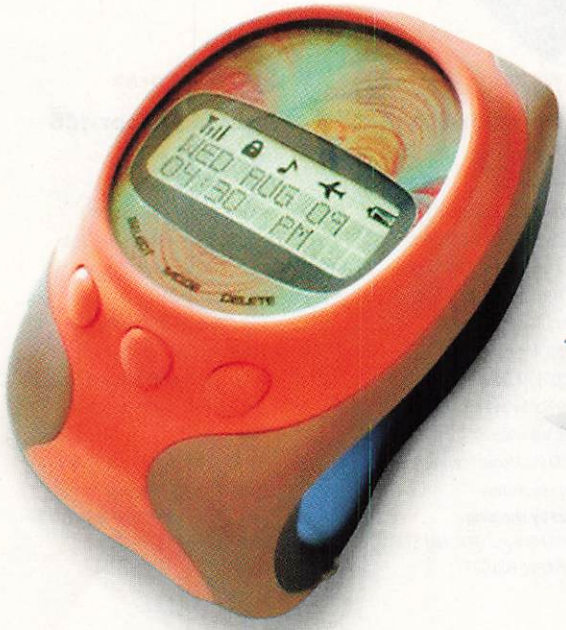
Such options may be presented to you in the event that MBNA is unable to approve your request. [1]For hard drives, GB=billion bytes. [2]8X DVD-ROM drives read a minimum of 4463 Kbps and a maximum of 10820 Kbps. [3]ITU V.90 modems are designed only to allow faster downloads from K56flex- or V.90-compliant digital sources. Maximum achievable download transmission rates are currently unknown, may not reach 56 Kbps, and will vary with line conditions. [4]24X Max CD-ROM data transfer rates may vary from 1500 to 3600 Kbps. Microsoft® Windows® Millennium Edition installed. Compaq, the Compaq Logo, and Presario are registered in the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. Inspiration Technology is a trademark of Compaq Information Technologies Group, L.P. in the U.S. and other countries. Intel, the Intel Inside Logo, and Pentium are registered trademarks, and Celeron and Intel SpeedStep are trademarks, of Intel Corporation. Microsoft, MS, and Windows are registered trademarks of Microsoft Corporation. Products and company names mentioned herein may be trademarks and/or registered trademarks of other companies. ©2001 Compaq Computer Corporation. 9061/07/01

cool tools

ultimate accessories for the digital life

THE TAPE RUNS OUT

VHS seems terribly old-fashioned in this digital world, and finally, the **Terapin CD Video Recorder** threatens to endanger the VCR. Pop in a blank CD-R or CD-RW disc (price: about $1) and transfer your old tapes to CDs or record from a camera, TV, VCR, or DVD. Once you're done, you can play the discs on PCs or on some DVD players. With the right cables, it'll work for audio, too. **$499 [goterapin.com]**



SOMETHING TO WATCH OVER ME

Is your son safely at school? By combining global positioning and cell phone circuitry into one wristwatch-size device, **Wherify Wireless** lets you keep tabs on anyone you care about. (Sensible or scary? You decide.) The 3.3-ounce wearable device is backed by a location service you can contact by Net or phone. **Price of service not yet determined. Device: about $300 [wherifywireless.com]**

SHARP SWISS

Knife geeks and computer geeks alike will get a thrill out of the **Swiss Army CyberTool 41**, which crams 41 separate gizmos into a translucent ruby, sapphire, onyx, or emerald case. (Hasn't this design trend run its course yet?) In addition to the usual blades, toothpicks, and tweezers, the knife has enough arcane wire cutters, crimpers, and DIP-switch setters to go spelunking inside any computer. **$90 [swissarmy.com]**

cool tools

by don willmott

WELL-CONNECTED KIDS

Walkie-talkies sure have come a long way. Kessel Electronics' **Wave Link** gives teens and tweens rudimentary PDA functionality, but within its range of 1,000 feet, kids can also snap and send low-resolution digital photos, record and send audio messages, chat in text format with several friends, transmit e-mail, and play games head-to-head. **$100 [mywavelink.com]**

WHO ARE YOU?

Go ahead and forget your passwords. Your body does the talking with the **Ethenticator USB 2500**, a fingerprint reader that unlocks your PC, your network connection, and your Web site passwords. TactileSense technology transforms a finger's electrical field into a unique digital code, and yes, it knows a live finger (as opposed to a fake or dead digit) when it sees one. **$129 [ethentica.com]**

ALL-AROUND SOUND

DVD freaks are obsessing over Nakamichi's ultra-luxe **SoundSpace 21**, which features a five-DVD/CD changer, two remote controls, five speakers, and two subwoofers. The freestanding towers conceal a secret: The speakers are motorized, so you can adjust them up and down individually via remote to create the perfect aural experience no matter where you're sitting. **$15,000 [nakamichi.com]**

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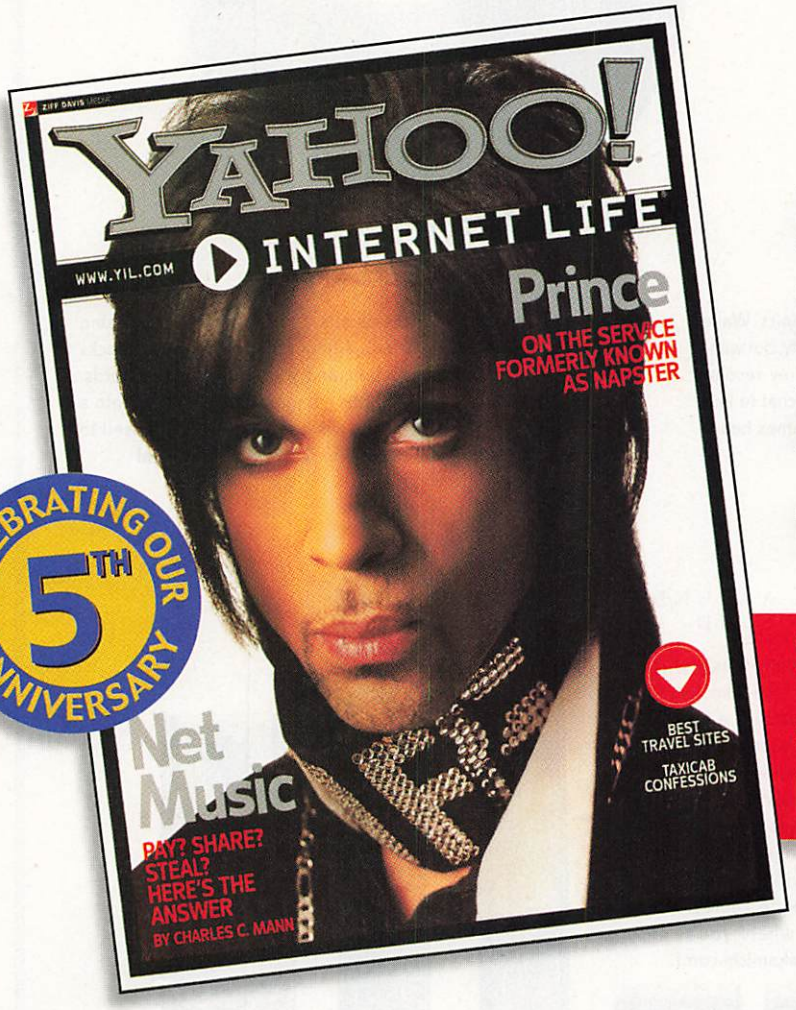

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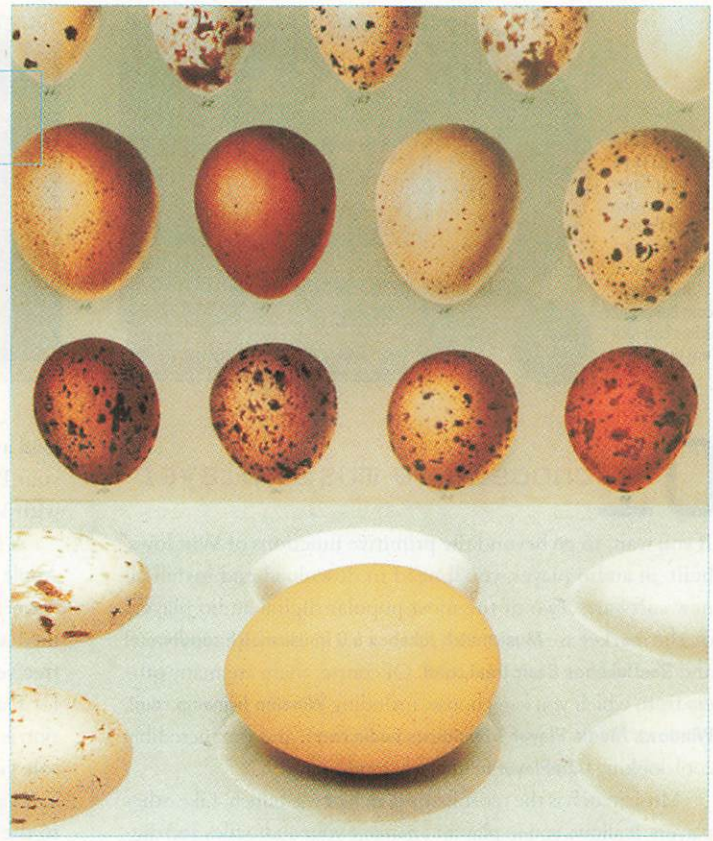
HOW TO GET THE MOST NET IN THE LEAST TIME

EDITED BY ROB BERNSTEIN

find it

BETTER THAN GOOGLE? VIVÍSIMO HAS HATCHED AN INCREDIBLE NEW SEARCH ENGINE AND SORTING TOOL



ERIC TUCKER

Search engines are about as precise as a blunderbuss. Run a query at one and you'll likely receive hundreds, if not thousands, of results. Some of them may be relevant, but a large majority of them will be off the mark, which leaves you to sort through the mess.

Even **Google [google.com]**, which uses a complex algorithm to determine the popularity of sites and which has garnered rave reviews from search experts, shows results as one long and unwieldy list.

If you're tired of clicking through page after page of results, give **Vivísimo [vivisimo.com]** a whirl. This new metasearch tool attacks the link overload problem by organizing Web pages into folders, which it calls "clusters." For instance, if you run a search on the word *Holmes,* the site will divvy up the results into such categories as "Sherlock Holmes," "Katie Holmes," and "Oliver Wendell Holmes."

Northern Light [northernlight.com] has offered a similar clustering service for years. However, Vivísimo does not crawl or index the Web, like its competitor. Rather, as a metasearch tool, it taps into the collective searching power of Google, Yahoo!, AltaVista, Lycos, Excite, Fast, MSN, WebCrawler, and Open Directory. This enables Vivísimo to search through a much larger pool of pages.

Vivísimo also offers some unique tools. Surfers can modify the layout of the site to their liking, increase or decrease the font size of results (without changing a browser's settings), and save important queries to the Favorites list in Microsoft Internet Explorer.

In the end, Vivísimo's greatest feature is its uncanny ability to track down what you're looking for. Dare we dub it the best new search service on the Web? Categorically, yes.

quick tips

CHECK YOUR VITALS

One moment your Net connection is pumping data into your system at blazing speeds, and the next it's kaput. What's behind this mysterious vacillation? Ask **MyVitalAgent [www.myvitalagent.com]**, a free utility that analyzes sputtering modems, as well as RealAudio and e-mail connections. The software requires Windows 95, 98, 2000, or NT.

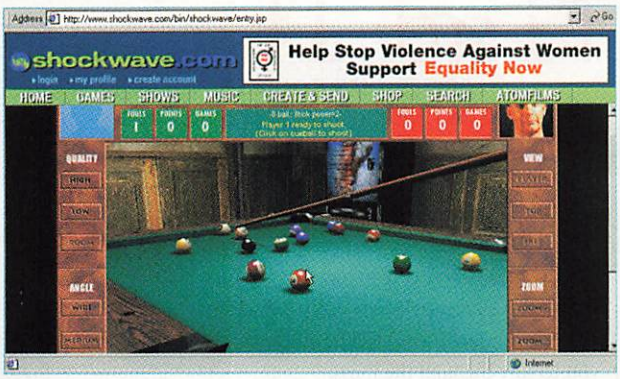
THE ART OF PRINTOUTS

In Internet Explorer, save time and ink by printing only the relevant portions of a Web page. Use your cursor to highlight the text or images you'd like to print, and type [Ctrl + P]. This will launch the Print window. In the Print Range section, click Selection and then OK.

WINDOWS DRESSING

No Windows power user should be without Tweak UI, an amazing set of utilities from Microsoft. The software helps you cover your Internet tracks, eradicate pesky programs from your hard drive, and much more. Tweak UI is free but unsupported by Microsoft. You can download the software at **CNET: Download.com [download.com]**.

SCORCHING NEW TOOLS FOR WATCHING MOVIES AND HEARING TUNES ONLINE



MEDIA SPECIALISTS UltraPlayer (right) can spin digital tunes and display a light show; at Shockwave.com (far right), surfers can rack 'em up in Real Pool 3-D.

.01 choosing a music player

If you want to go beyond the primitive functions of Windows' built-in audio player, you'll need to download and install all new software. Two of the most popular digital audio players on the market are **Musicmatch Jukebox 6.0 [musicmatch.com/home]** and **RealJukebox Basic [real.com].** Of course, there are many others from which you can choose, including **Winamp [winamp.com], Windows Media Player 7 [windowsmedia.com],** and the incredibly cool-looking **UltraPlayer [ultraplayer.com].**

Musicmatch is the most feature-rich of the bunch. Like other players, it allows you to play and manage your audio files and digitize your existing CD collection. But it also lets surfers burn MP3 files onto blank CD-R discs and record music from external devices (see Surf Guru to learn how). RealJukebox comes in a close second, but the quality of recorded music is wanting. As for Windows Media Player, for all its great features, it cannot record in MP3 format; this makes it a bad choice for MP3 hounds.

.02 which video player?

RealPlayer 8 [real.com] is the hands-down best software for viewing streaming digital video. For all other video files (such as AVIs and MPEGs), PC owners should use Windows Media Player 7. It's a huge memory hog, but it can play nearly any media file, including Apple's QuickTime movies (*.qt* files). Warning: If your computer is running Windows 95 or NT, do not download and install this version of the software; it won't work on your PC and may screw up your system settings. Instead, stick with Windows Media Player 6.4.

A Mac version of Windows Media Player 7 is available, but Apple users should probably stay with the less buggy **QuickTime Player 5 [apple.com/quicktime].** QuickTime can also handle most media formats, including 360-degree panoramic photos. The free version of the software boasts a slicker interface, support for Flash 4, and customizable skins. Although a Windows version is available, it would be unwise for PC users to make it their sole video player. It cannot play Windows Media files, and the software provides all too many reminders to surfers to upgrade to the Pro version.

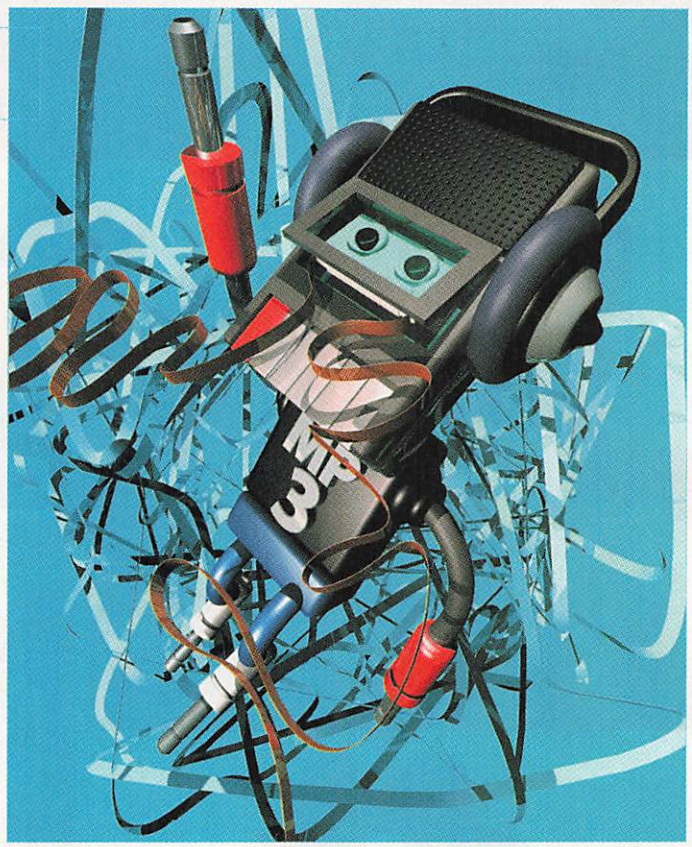
.03 plug-in potpourri

Even if you've installed a media player on your PC, you'll still need special plug-ins to view Web animations (a plug-in is software that adds new functionality to your browser). Two of the Web's most popular plug-ins are **Shockwave** and **Flash Player [sdc.shockwave.com/shockwave/download].** The former lets you play online games and use other kinds of interactive entertainment. The latter helps deliver Web animations to your desktop. Go to **Shockwave.com** for a directory of Shockwave and Flash diversions.

Less critical, but still worth a look, are "virtual reality" plug-ins that allow you to explore 3-D worlds. The **iPix Viewer [ipix.com]** plug-in lets you observe 360-degree photos; you'll find a gallery of stunning iPix panoramas to click through at the iPix site.

surf guru

UPLOADING CASSETTE TAPES; PLUGGING INTERNET EXPLORER



Q» I know how to convert CD files into MP3 files, but how do you convert songs on cassette tapes into MP3 files? It would be nice to transfer my entire library of '80s tunes onto my PC.

A» You want to digitize your enormous Air Supply collection for posterity, eh? No problem. The first thing you need to do is make sure your computer has a line-in or mic-in socket, and that your cassette player or stereo has an output jack. If they do, then feel free to read on. If not, you're out of luck.

The next thing you need to do is purchase a cable that connects your PC to your cassette player. Your sound card likely uses a 1/8-inch stereo plug. The cable's other end, depending on your cassette player, may use one or two RCA stereo plugs. You can purchase the cable at your local Radio Shack or at **RadioShack.com**.

Once your equipment is linked via cable, you must download and install software that's capable of recording songs from the cassette player. Both Musicmatch Jukebox 6.0 and RealJukebox 2 can record from external devices.

With both the PC and cassette player on, you're now ready to begin recording. If you use Musicmatch Jukebox, click the Options menu and choose Recorder/Source/Line In. If you use RealJukebox, click the Tools menu and choose Record from Mic/Line in. Immediately begin playing your cassette tape.

Q» I'm having problems with Internet Explorer. It keeps crashing on me. What should I do?

A» Regrettably, you may have to reinstall it. But before you do, I suggest you run the browser's Repair Tool, assuming you have IE 5.*x* or later. You can access this feature by clicking Start/Settings/Control Panel. Double-click Add/Remove Programs. This will launch the Add/Remove Programs Properties window. Use the scroll bar to find the entry Microsoft Internet Explorer 5.*x* and Internet Tools. Click it and then the Add/Remove button; a new window will pop up. Choose the Repair Internet Explorer option. Windows will then attempt to identify and fix the error in your copy of IE 5.*x*. If the Repair Tool cannot resolve the problem, it may advise you to reinstall the software.

In the future, you should consider downloading Microsoft's Internet Explorer Error Reporting Tool, which is available at **Microsoft Windows Update [windowsupdate.microsoft.com]**. The utility pops up whenever you encounter a browser error and allows you to inform Microsoft about the problem via the Net. It also attempts to identify and fix browser errors, and will notify you about any software patches that might already exist.

ILLUSTRATION: EDDIE BOWEN/WWW.COSMO7.COM

aol watch

AOL e-mail is full of quirks and hidden features (and things that go bump in the night). For instance, to reference a paragraph or sentence from an incoming message, you must highlight it before clicking Reply. Another buried feature lets you add background images to outgoing messages. Just right-click on the text box in a new composition window and select Background Picture. Then choose an image from your hard drive. For other useful e-mail features, go to Keyword: Preferences and then choose Mail. Here you can instruct AOL to perform automatic spell-checks and save incoming and outgoing messages to your PC.

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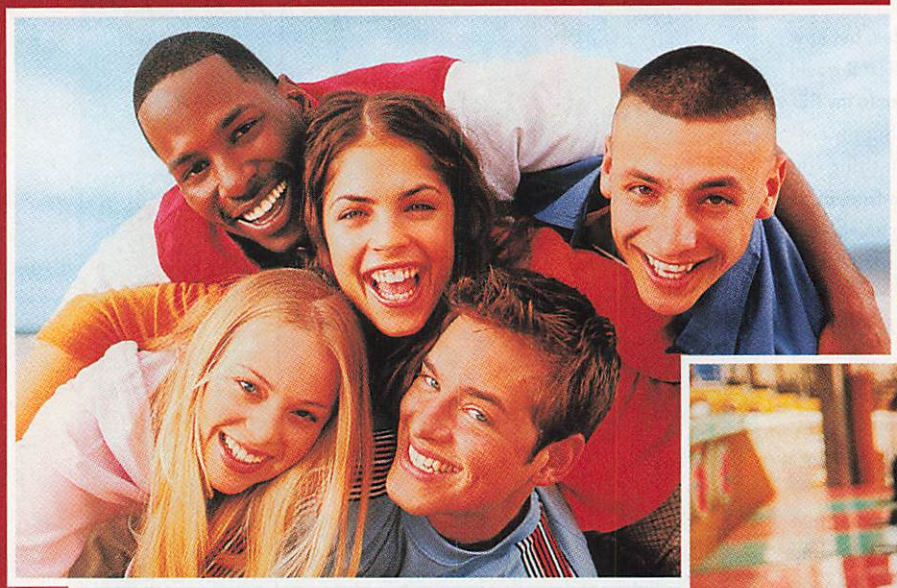

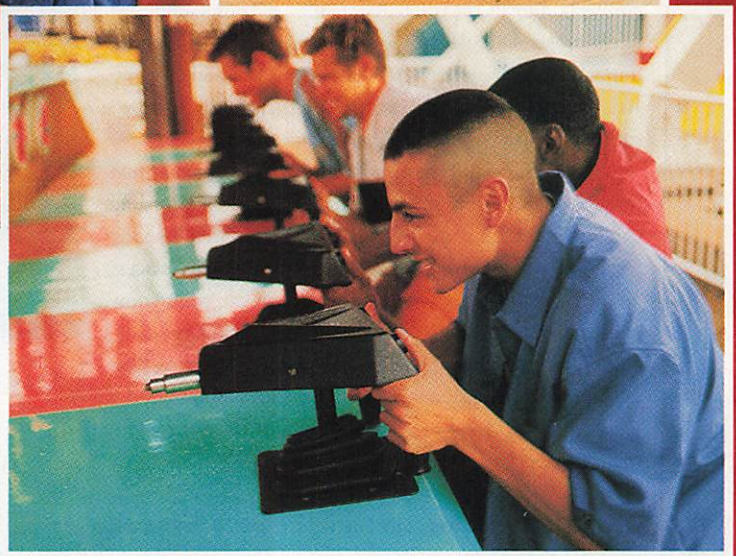

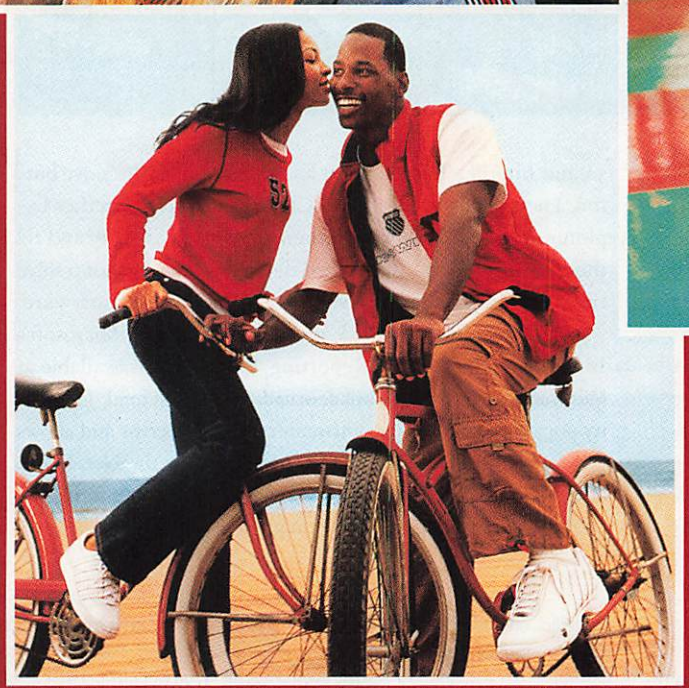

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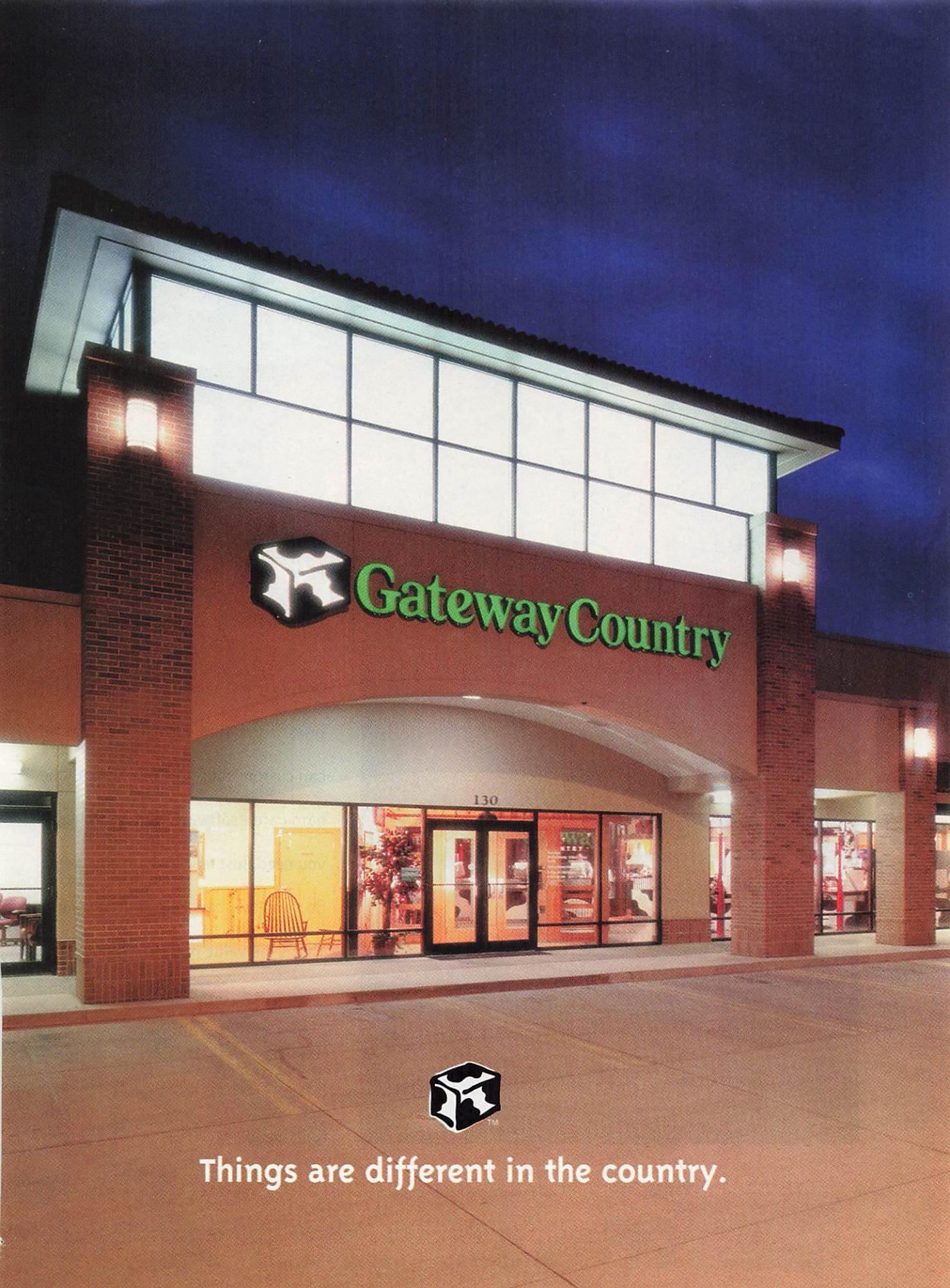
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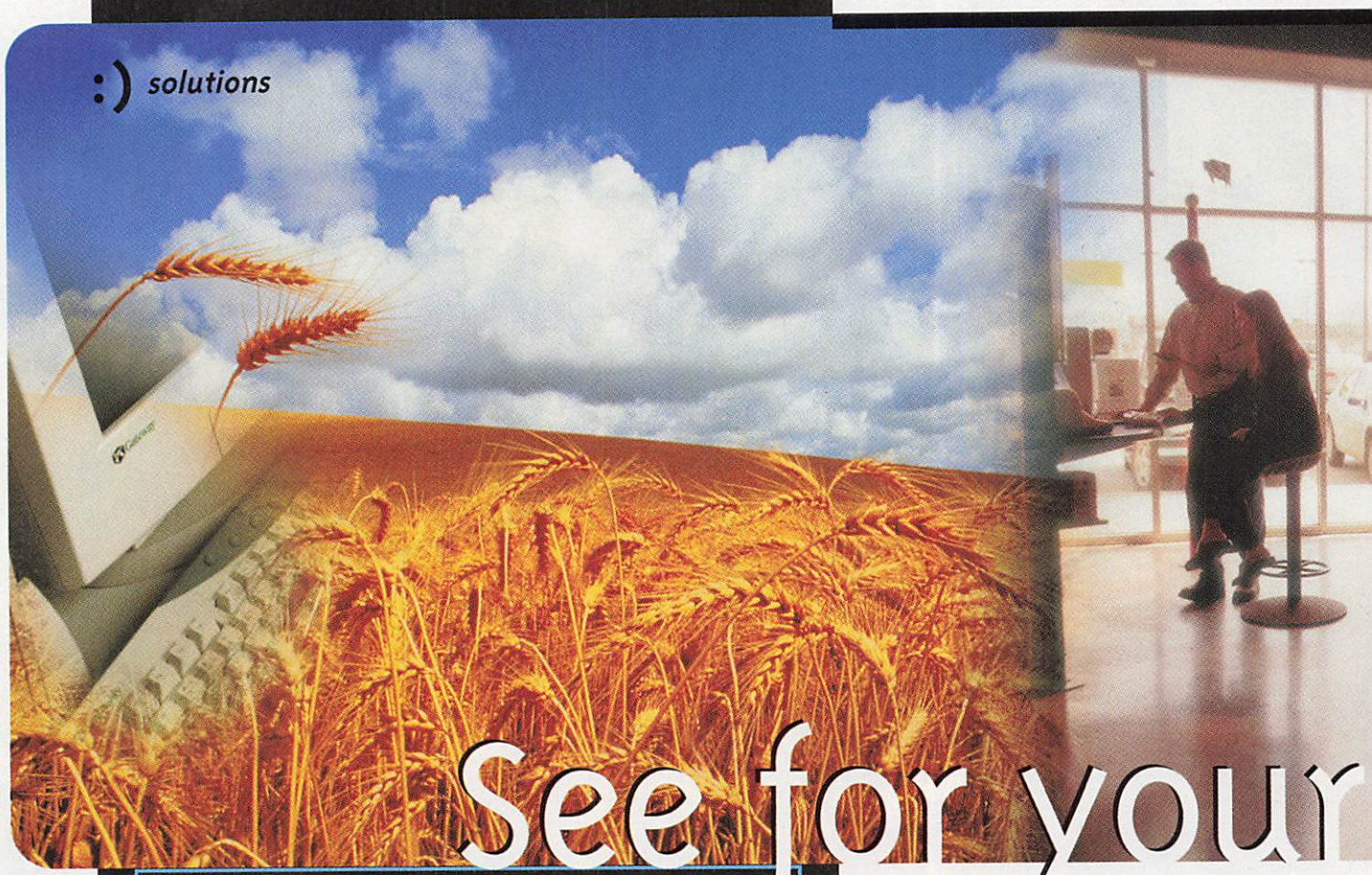

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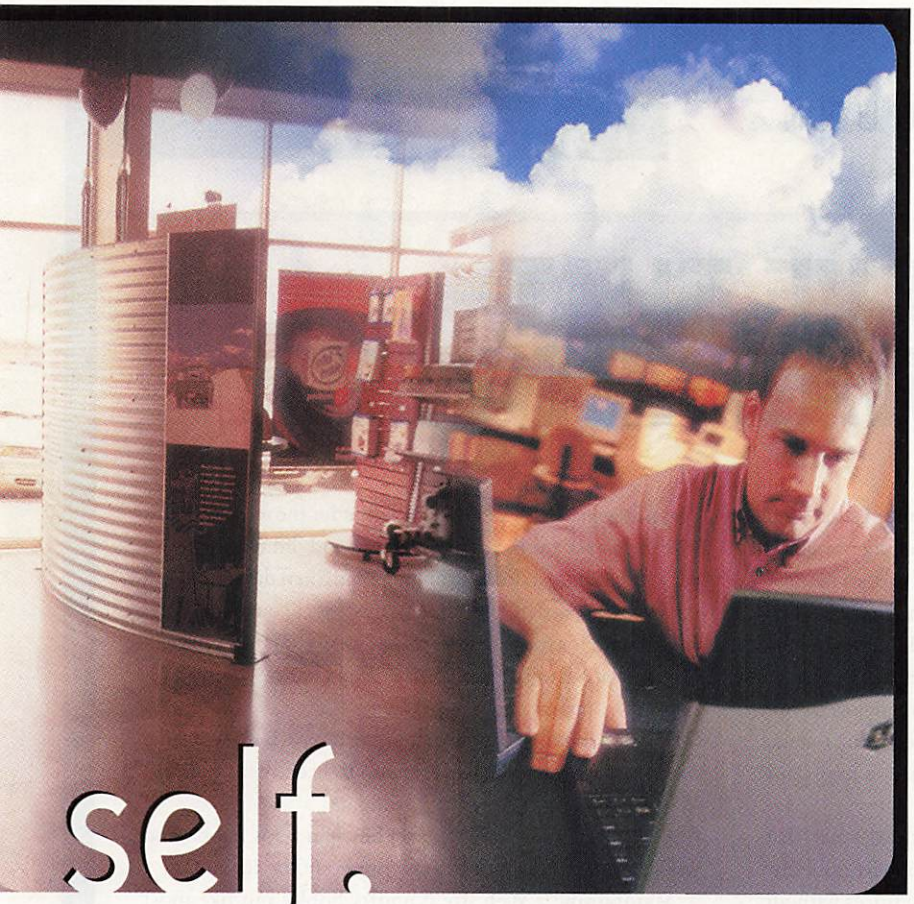
3. Visit gateway.com, call 1-800-846-2000 or write to Gateway Terms & Conditions, P.O. Box 1951, North Sioux City, SD 57049-1951



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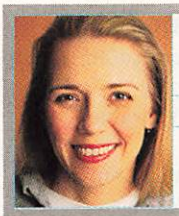

ANGELA GUNN

TAKE THAT, OLD WAY/NET WAY

Q: In the April issue, Old Way/Net Way columnist David Sheff reported that his wife shopped for a vacuum cleaner by going to a store and having a salesperson show her various models. She left the store with intentions to buy a Flamenco II. Then Sheff went online and bought the Flamenco II for $51 less than at the local store. Wonderful! Now, did they return to the store to pay the salesperson for his or her help, time, and overhead? Sheff's column is an excellent service, but promoting the use of local stores for doing research without somehow paying for the information is not nice.

A: If my colleague Sheff had been scrupulously ethical in that particular Old Way/Net Way search, he might have done any or all of the following: **1.** stuck to comparing prices without the demonstration by using newspaper ads, printed literature, or browsing in the store; **2.** informed the salesperson up front that his wife was comparison shopping, thus allowing the salesperson to decide how much time to spend on this project; **3.** gone back to the store with Net quote in hand and asked if the salesperson could match the price.

It's a central dilemma in the Internet experience: Web shops rule for convenience and price, but they don't stack up in hands-on experience; Sheff's $51 savings wouldn't have been worth nearly so much if the local store hadn't added value. The "shop offline, buy online" tactic people often use is a real problem for small stores, which see it as a cynical exploitation of technology that was originally trumpeted as helping the small business owner. So much for the lie we fed these people about cyberspace allowing the mom-and-pop shops to compete on an equal footing with the giants. (*There's* a myth that deserves an ignominious burial.)

When I put this to Sheff, he argued that taking advantage of premium customer service and running to the Web's bargain basement is a big part of the current e-commerce routine, and businesses are finding ways to adapt to it. That doesn't mean it's ethical in my book. But for the record, Sheff's wife didn't ask for the demonstration and did tell the salesperson that she was looking online—and Sheff did indeed call the store back with the Net quote (this was cut out of the original column for space reasons). He did, in short, act ethically. Would that we were all so conscientious.

The 'shop offline, buy online' tactic people often use is a real problem for small stores, which see it as a cynical exploitation of technology

Q: Lately a lot of the smaller sites I visit have buttons asking me to donate through Amazon.com to keep them running. Why is everyone looking for a handout?

A: Because there ain't no free Net lunch in 2001, bubba, and would it kill you to stuff a dollar or two in the tip jar?

Maintaining a Web site is a nifty hobby, but like most hobbies, it costs money. If you're popular and a lot of visitors come, it costs more, because the service hosting your pages sees the increase in traffic and asks for extra to cover its expenses. The Amazon Honor System is one way keepers of small sites can attempt to defray the high cost of staying open—one click and Amazon deducts an amount from the visitor's credit card, takes a cut, and passes the rest to the site keeper. It's a nice way of letting visitors thus inclined show their appreciation—and support—by keeping the site running.

In the past few months, small one-time payments like this have become a popular way of putting your money where your browser is; online-journal service **Blogger [blogger.com]** raised enough in an emergency call for funding to buy three new servers, while a fund-raiser at **F---ed Company [f---edcompany.com]** for families of victims of the Edgewater Technology shootings in Massachusetts back in December garnered more than $16,000. This is grassroots Web-community support at its finest, and it keeps worthy projects alive. Ethically speaking, no one's making you contribute. No one's making you visit twice, either. ■

Go ahead, ask: angela_gunn@ziffdavis.com

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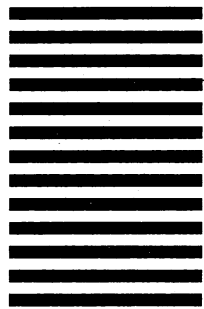

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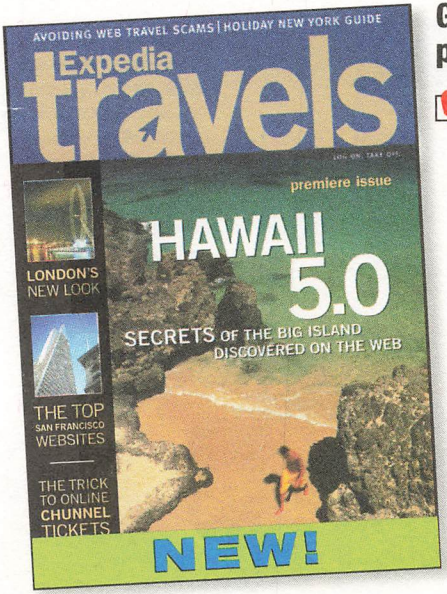

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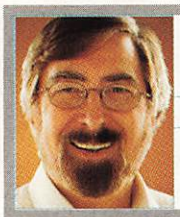

ROBERT SCHEER

PRIVATE GUMSHOES WALK ALL OVER US

Big Brother, it turns out, is a private dick.

Yes, you are being watched by the FBI, the IRS, the CIA, and just about every other government agency, federal and local. But guess what: They no longer do their own detective work. For the most part, the spying is now carried out by dozens of private online companies. And leading in the battle for snooper market share is an outfit called **ChoicePoint [www.choicepoint.net]**, which boasts of possessing some 13 billion records—records it's willing to share with anyone who has the money to buy.

The Justice and Treasury departments estimate that together they spent $20 million last year on ChoicePoint's services. In fact, so dependent is the FBI on ChoicePoint that a joint Web site, **ChoicePoint Online for the FBI [www.cpfbi.com]**, features the company's logo right alongside the agency's official symbol. The going price for your personal data—an initial $250 fee and then $50 for each quick search—may seem high to some, but there are dozens of other companies offering your cranky neighbor or angry ex-lover some cheaper variation on this very intrusive service. What's more, newcomers are getting into the business at an alarming rate and buying up massive lists of data once buried safely in courthouse papers, in the files of medical insurance companies, and even in the records of your friendly corner bookstore.

So dependent is the FBI on ChoicePoint that a joint Web site features the company's logo right alongside the agency's official symbol

The problem is that, as the laws are currently written, you have next to nothing in the way of privacy protection in this regard. Nor is there much hope for any immediate improvement, since a huge alliance of powerful industry lobbyists—including IBM, AOL, and Microsoft, all champing at the bit to sell or purchase your private data—is poised to pounce in fierce opposition to any privacy legislation that has a chance of passage.

How legal is it for the FBI to use private gumshoes? It would be ironic if the Feds, in paying for the data gathered by private companies, ran afoul of the Privacy Act passed by Congress in 1974. Drawn up in the aftermath of the Nixon era—during which the president used the FBI and IRS to spy on journalists and others cited on his infamous "enemies list"—the Privacy Act mandates that government agencies may maintain files on individuals only if they're needed to pursue an ongoing case. So far, the FBI and other agencies have skirted that restriction by using the open-ended databases of private firms that are not restricted by the law. As *The Wall Street Journal* put it in a front-page story in April, "ChoicePoint and its rivals specialize in doing what the law discourages the government from doing on its own."

Clearly we citizens need protection from these private spymasters as much as we do from the government, and this loophole needs to be closed. One way to do so is to apply to these online "lookup services" the same rights that consumers now have to see and correct their ratings with credit-reporting agencies. Given the widespread public dissemination of their information, these new services have far more power to unfairly damage a person's reputation than do the old-line credit bureaus. Indeed, ChoicePoint—a spin-off from Equifax, one of the top three credit bureaus—is more powerful than its parent but not subject to the same legally required consumer protections.

Just how powerful is ChoicePoint? Well, it may have helped to decide the last presidential election. The state of Florida, aiming to exclude ineligible voters, had spent $4 million purchasing a national list of convicted felons from one of ChoicePoint's subsidiaries. But it turns out that in Florida, voters convicted of felonies in other states *can*, under certain circumstances, legally vote—though at least 2,120 of these potential voters were turned away. So unwarranted reliance on these lists, along with other documented errors by Florida officials, could have been enough to swing the election.

This is another example of why these snoopers need to operate within a regulatory framework. Letting private online dicks do the FBI's work just makes them all Untouchables—and unreachable by private citizens. ■

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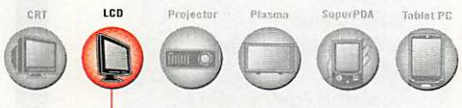

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talk of the net

TRUE TALES AND PASSING SITES EDITED BY LARRY SMITH

RACE MATTERS

The Shot Heard Round the World

When Tim Wise wrote an article urging fellow white Americans to "pull our heads out of our collective ass" following the March school shooting in Santee, California, thousands of people complied. **School Shootings and White Denial [alternet.org/wise]**, a manifesto blasting suburban complacency, snaked its way through innumerable e-mail lists, boosted traffic by 90 percent for its originating site, **AlterNet.org**, and generated thousands of e-mails to Wise.

He writes: "White people live in an utter state of self-delusion. We think danger is black, brown and poor, and if we can just move far enough away from 'those people' in the cities we'll be safe....Oh sure, there is plenty of violence in urban communities and schools. But mass murder, wholesale slaughter, take-a-gun-and-see-how-many-you can-kill kinda craziness seems made for those safe places: the white suburbs or rural communities."

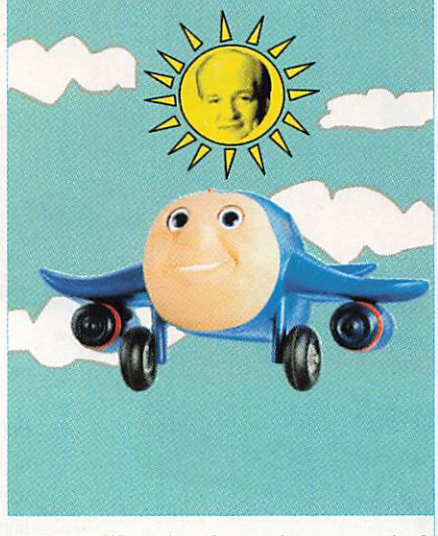
Wise was surprised that his mix of blunt language and hard statistics—such as government numbers showing that white teens are more likely to use and sell drugs than black teens—had such a reverb effect. But the most interesting part was that it resonated with people of color, especially African Americans, even more than with whites.

"I've written pieces like this before, the crazy-white-people-whose-race-no-one-notices piece," says Wise, an author, lecturer, and advisory board member at Fisk University Race Relations Institute. Of the 7,500 letters he'd received by early May, half came from writers who said they were people of color, while 25 percent came from people identifying themselves as white. Some African American readers got the forwarded e-mail from 15 different sources. "The overriding thing was that there's a certain white and male privilege that amplifies my voice," Wise says. One of the three dozen journalists to cover the Wise phenomenon, *Washington Post* columnist Donna Britt, even jokingly asked Wise for confirmation that he was white.

A white man talking about white school shooters is a good case study for what makes content get replicated online: It's controversial, timely, and easily cross-posted. Says Don Hazen, the executive editor of AlterNet: "Other people would have edited out much of the provocative nature that really pushed it, but it seems like there's a real hunger out there for the alternative viewpoint." There was also an element of what, in the ghoulish news business, one might call good timing: Within weeks of the Santee shooting there was another school shooting in a white suburban neighborhood.

While many white Americans may not yet have heard of Wise's article, for Art McGee, who runs the influential Black Radical Congress listservs, it became political "spam"—something many found in their in-box over and over. Nonetheless, it reinforces an important lesson. "While the Web continues to garner the majority of the attention whenever discussion turns to the Internet, it's e-mail that has flown under the radar screen as a still very powerful Internet tool," says McGee. "Even with all the fancy bells and whistles that grace many of today's Web sites, e-mail continues to be the number one Internet application, hands down." It may even be the first real bridge across the digital divide. **FARAI CHIDEYA**

Net Buzz



TEEN SPIRIT What's that infectious ditty in your in-box? Could be "Hyakugojyuuichi," an animated parody that stars Harry Potter and Pee-Wee Herman, created by 14-year-old Neil Cicierega. **[animutation.com]**

Trust us

sfdt.com/flash/movies/296.html
luddite.com
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MILESTONES

Kozmo, We Hardly Knew Ye

Losing a friend to natural causes is loss enough. But when it's a suicide—as the more cynical observer could label the untimely end (after rampant, orgiastic expansion) of Kozmo.com, the profitless online delivery service—Kübler-Ross's stages of grieving offer only cold comfort.

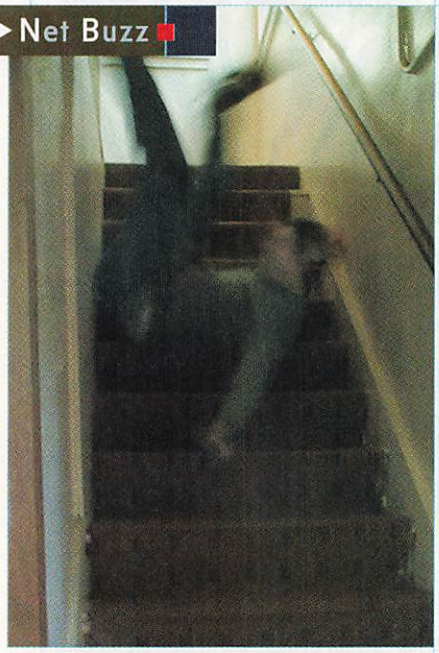
I went online one unseasonably cold spring night to rent *Gladiator* and stock up on Veggie Puffs and overpriced skim milk. But instead of finding that signature orange-and-green splash screen, all I could see was "Netscape can't find...."

A few years ago, I had lost another friend—West Side Story, my favorite restaurant in the hood. But in its case, the tattered tablecloths and the waitstaff's sotto voce jabs of gallows humor warned me of Story's end, as it were. No such setup here.

Anyone who kept one eye open during Psych 101 knows the grieving steps, so I'll skip the primer. Let's just say that my denial took the form of constant clicking to a ghost site without so much as a page of explanation (at least during the first day or so of Life After Kozmo). At one point, I did get something, but it turned out to be my own cached page. Grief? That came the night I returned to Blockbuster, home of *Dude, Where's My Car?* in nona-tuplicate.

Acceptance? That would be my subscription to **Netflix [netflix.com]**. It'll do, but its snail-mail deliveries from the West Coast take a few days—and it won't send my Puffs. So as goes the dot-com bubble, so must go the niceties of lox-when-you-crave-it? No way. But until some brave post-boomers try it again—maybe this time eschewing the online Wal-Mart concept and expanding to only *half* a continent within two years—I'll be getting my movies by mail. Because much like Kozmo, and even West Side Story—which put moo shoo pork, pierogi, and cheeseburgers on the same inspired menu—this is a business that I really hope makes it. The fact that this time it takes a couple of days to go from my browser to my bedroom may be exactly the point. **RON BEL BRUNO**

Net Buzz



TOUTED TUMBLERS Surfers are spreading the word about **Stair Diving [www.404.org/dive]**, where philosophical daredevils hurl themselves down stairwells and expound the theories behind their mad tumbling.

STAIR DIVING: NEIL MEREDITH JR.

E-CARD: INDIA

The Cricket and the Web

Until recently, a cricket match on the Indian subcontinent was a matter of life and death. During weekday games, people of all ages at offices across the land logged on to **Totalcricket [total-cricket.com]** (for live video and radio) or, for the less well-connected, the likes of **Clickcricket.com** and **Criclive [criclive.com]** (for the score). Traffic would come to a standstill during tense moments; wireless Palms and phones were sneaked into schools for constant updates. Firecrackers (and office chatter anew) meant one thing only: victory for the home team.

All that changed about a year ago when a cricketer named Majoj Prabhakar exposed the betting and match fixing that was rampant in India's game of the gods. Prabhakar teamed up with a reporter from Indian news site **Tehelka.com**, wore secret recording equipment and pinhole cameras, taped his colleagues casually admitting to throwing matches for a tidy sum of money—and almost single-handedly ended the subcontinent's love affair with the game.

Since then, anticricket sites have been having a field day. One site, **ShameOnCricket.com**, is on a mission to combat cricket corruption. Log on and a kitschy Flash animation greets you, featuring former Pakistan captain Wasim Akram's mug shot framed in a heart. And as you watch in disbelief, the heart rips right through the middle and falls down in two pieces. Next come photographs of cheating

players, while *"Shame on you!!"* flashes ominously and stacks of money make their way into the big picture. It all ends with *"You sold your pride for money!"* Aesthetically challenged, to say the least, but it certainly drives the ball to the boundary.

The message is further reinforced with words from a popular Hindi film song (the average Indian film features more songs than actual dialogue), *Amma dekh tera munda bigra jaye*, which literally translates to "Look, ma, your son is going bad." Once inside, you can catch up on the latest in Scamsville, where you'll find news, discussion, investigation reports, and a gallery of "questionable characters" for the taking. Feeling jaunty? Then place your name on a resolution against "the curse of Match Fixing." This will be sent to the International Cricket Council.

Or you could just do your bit like someone called Sivaraj D. His anticricket page, **Cricket Is Injurious to Nation [sivaraj.freeyellow.com/cricket.html]**, is an impassioned screed against the game. He addresses some pertinent points, such as: Is it really a *game*? Apparently not. After all, what other game is played for the entire day, and sometimes even five full days! Sivaraj accuses cricket of having more *masala* (spice) than meat.

But all's not lost for the game. Fans are gradually making their way back to the pitch, like a wife forgiving a cheating husband she's always doubted anyway. This was evident by the shouts across this correspondent's workplace in Bombay when India's recent victory over Australia made it pretty clear that most people, supposedly hard at work, were secretly glued to their PCs.

KETAKI BANGA-SHANKAR

FOR A DAILY DOSE OF NET BUZZ, CHECK OUT YIL.COM/BUZZ

Net Buzz

Undine

LETTER-PERFECT Linguists and artisans are forwarding links to **A Is for Absinthe [graphomanic.net/alpha/alpha.html]**, an eye-popping exhibit that illustrates and defines such words as *perambulate* and *undine*.

DEEP GEEK

High-Tech Treasure

Armed with a Global Positioning System unit and a grocery bag crammed with used action figures, Cache_nInjA walks down Kent Street in Williamsburg, Brooklyn, and hooks a turn toward the sewage-strewn East River. The windchill may be below freezing, but he's heading for a stretch of deserted land dotted with ice and crumbling piers. The final destination? An abandoned vehicle otherwise known as N40_43.298 W073_57.78.

With his thrift shop getup and New Balance sneakers, nInjA could be any twentysomething in trendy Williamsburg. But instead of a cell phone, he's wielding a GPS-enabled Magellan 315, a handheld device that resembles a PDA. The gadget allows him to track his location by latitude and longitude, and, when paired with the Web, is the main ingredient in a new high-tech sport called geocaching—an amalgam of *geo* for geography and *cache* for secret stash.

The game requires players to plant containers of stuff in hard-to-find spots, then list the coordinates at **Geocaching [geocaching.com]**. To play, locate a cache, take an item, replace it with your own, sign the logbook inside, and post your tale on the Web. Cachers span the globe and range from tech-loving professionals to families with young kids, all of whom interact online and swap packages in the offline world without ever actually meeting. "It's fun to share the same spot on earth with someone without knowing any more [about the person]," says nInjA, who, like most players, uses a pseudonym, giving the whole thing that pseudo-important *Matrix* feeling.

While much geocaching takes place in rural areas, it's more challenging in cities, where GPS reception is erratic and finding an obscure hiding place isn't easy. But nInjA's burnt-out car in Brooklyn is a winner. He peers under the rusted steering wheel and checks up on his deCepTicon cAche, which has stumped several players. But someone, perhaps a civilian, has been by since he tucked his container away months ago: The logbook is stained and has lost its plastic wrapping, and one of the felt dolls inside is soaked. He replaces it with a toy soldier, rewraps the package, and climbs through a hole in the fence. Nearby, local skate rats practice, unaware of the treasures hidden practically under their noses. "It's absurd," nInjA says with a laugh, making his way across a pile of rubble. "There's a few of us running around, finding little boxes stashed in places that hundreds of people walk by every day."

LISA KO

DESIGN: AMANDA SPIELMAN; BOOK CONCEPT AND ILLUSTRATIONS: AYA HOSHI

TRUE BELIEVERS

Breakfast With Tiffany

Dot-coms may be in a blue period, but Tiffany Shlain maintains a red-hot enthusiasm. As founder and director of the Webby Awards, the 31-year-old Shlain has spent the last five years turning the Webbys from a quirky unknown San Francisco industry event into a celebrity-studded media phenomenon. On July 18, she'll host the fifth annual awards at the San Francisco Opera House.

How are you handling the new skepticism about dot-coms?

I like the skepticism, because this is a real story again. It's like 1996—before people got lost in the hype of the dot-com craze. The Internet is so much more than commerce. Commerce is only one category; there are 27 others. Despite the doom and gloom, the technology of Web sites is still getting better. Last year everyone was judging the Web by stock prices and traffic, but we've been judging the Web with the same criteria for five years. The real leaders in this industry are the ones that realize this is about innovative technology and design, not getting rich.

Do the Webbys still matter?

In every industry it's important to have standards and honor excellent work. Two years ago everyone had a huge marketing budget, and it was easy to talk about the Web as the Next Big Thing. Now it's even more important to show people's excellent work in all categories of the Web.

Which nominated site will be out of business by the time the winners are announced?

I don't know. Every year since we started there have been a couple that have gone out of business. Every industry goes through its down period. The Web is so cheap to create that you don't have to spend a million dollars to make a good site. It's about survival of the fittest now. People who really believe in technology are going right back into it—it's the people who were in it for the money who are leaving.

What's the application you're most excited about?

I'm really excited about wireless. I travel a lot for work and love any tools that allow me to be as mobile as possible. The Grammys are named after the original technology of the gramophone. Perhaps in the future it won't be the Web we're talking about, but the Webbys will still be the name of the awards show.

TIFF FILE: Webbys founder Tiffany Shlain.

What's your desert island link?

I have so many, but right now I really like [the Zen Buddhist site] **www.do-not-zzz.com**.

What site would you like to see that hasn't been done?

One that would coordinate scheduling on a really high level. A site that would match my schedule with someone else's schedule and figure out the times that best work for us to get together. I hate dealing with that over e-mail. **RACHEL LEHMANN-HAUPT**

FIGHT OF THE MONTH

Revenge Is Sweet

The Protagonist » Mark McElwain, a 25-year-old from Dallas, proprietor of **Psycho-Ex [psychoexgirlfriend.com].**

The Antagonist »"Peg," Mark's ex.

The Charge » Total insanity. After the couple broke up, "Peg" began an alarming barrage of enraged and distraught voice mail messages. A vengeful Mark chose to post audio files of 53 of those messages online.

Dubious Justification » Writes Mark, "It's hard enough getting over someone. When she leaves you in excess of 50 psychotic voice mails, it makes it even harder. So let's have some fun getting over her by starting a Web site."

The Controversy » Concerned citizens over at **NewsTrolls [newstrolls.com]** believe the whole thing is a hoax, noting that the site's URL was registered before all the phone calls were reportedly even received. Meanwhile, the site is front-loaded with pop-up advertisements, leading some to suspect that Psycho-Ex is a ruse to make "Mark" some money.

How To Marry a Millionaire? » Mark is now using fame to find himself a new girlfriend via a "Win a Date with Mark" contest at **Spin the Bottle Dot Com [spinthebottle.com].**

The Antagonist's Response » Silence. "Peg" has not chosen to identify herself. But we might glean her response to the public humiliation from Voice Mail No. 8: "If you're worried about me doing anything crazy, I'm not going to. I value my life too much." **JANELLE BROWN**

SHLAIN: PAT JOHNSON; BOXER ILLUSTRATION: BRUNO

ORDINARY PEOPLE DOING EXTRAORDINARY THINGS BY JEREMY CAPLAN

DR. MOM PLUGS IN

Maternal instincts (and a PC) take on the family doctor – and win

Five years ago, Karen Murray gave her son Michael a computer for his fifth birthday. After putting him to bed that night, Murray turned on the new PC and popped in a disc called the Family Doctor. She typed in some observations about her son's unusual appearance, noting that at age five Michael was already a full head taller than his classmates and had abnormally loose joints and long limbs. Although doctors had assured her several times that Michael was okay, her maternal instincts sensed red flags. Sitting at the computer while Michael slept, she joined millions of Americans unafraid to take their family's health into their own hands.

Moments after receiving her query, the computer spit back an unusual diagnosis: Marfan syndrome, an uncommon hereditary disorder of the connective tissue that affects about 200,000 Americans.

After a sleepless night, Murray rushed her son to the hospital, where the computer's assessment was confirmed. She broke down in tears, and Michael's grandmother had to take the boy home to shield him from his mother's anguish. Though she struggled at first to cope with the diagnosis, Murray soon regained her composure, helped Michael to understand his condition, and committed to educating herself and other parents about Marfan and its symptoms.

Five years later, Michael is healthy and undergoes frequent tests and treatment, while Murray, who is president of Claiborne for Men, has become the national spokesperson for the **National Marfan Foundation [marfan.org]**. She recently won an Outstanding Mother of the Year award from the Father's Day/Mother's Day Council for the Internet-based support she offers parents across the country to help them deal with the syndrome. Each week she responds to e-mail from parents who find out about Marfan through the Web or computer software. "You saved my child's life," one wrote to her. "My son has exactly the same symptoms as yours did."

Murray uses the Net regularly to read up on Marfan and to track the latest medical research. She hopes that someday her son will also use the Net to share experiences with others who have lived with similar symptoms. In the opinion of some, sites such as **Ability Online [ablelink.org]** and **PatchWorx [www.patchworx.org]** offer excellent opportunities for kids with all sorts of medical conditions to exchange stories, commiserate, celebrate, and just chat. But Murray says that at 10, her son isn't quite mature enough to study the disease online or chat with other young Marfan sufferers. "I'm concerned about my son going online and reading stories about kids who have died," she says, though she expects Michael to reach the appropriate stage of maturity soon. For her own awareness about Marfan and its symptoms and treatment, though, she is thankful for the Net. "Without the computer," she says, "I might have lost my son at a very early age."

For parents who, like Murray, are concerned about the health of a child, **KidsHealth [kidshealth.com]** can be a valuable resource. Sponsored by the Nemours Foundation, which is funded by philanthropist Alfred I. DuPont, the site gives detailed information on medical conditions that commonly affect children, guidance on treatment options, and suggestions about how to recognize symptoms of illness in a child.

For parents focused on the social and emotional development of their child, the excellent **AboutOurKids.org** features comprehensive insights from mental health professionals. The section titled "Is my kid OK?" addresses issues that parents often worry about, whether they are dealing with toddlers or teenagers. One such question comes from a parent who wonders if her adolescent's obsession with weight is normal. Rather than attempting a personal, specific reply, the site gives a thorough explanation of eating disorders. In addition to real stories of kids with anorexia nervosa and bulimia, the section explains how to diagnose the problems, how to treat them, and where to go for more help. ■

WANT TO KNOW MORE? DISCUSS THIS ARTICLE WITH KAREN MURRAY AT YIL.COM/HEART

BOBBY NEEL ADAMS

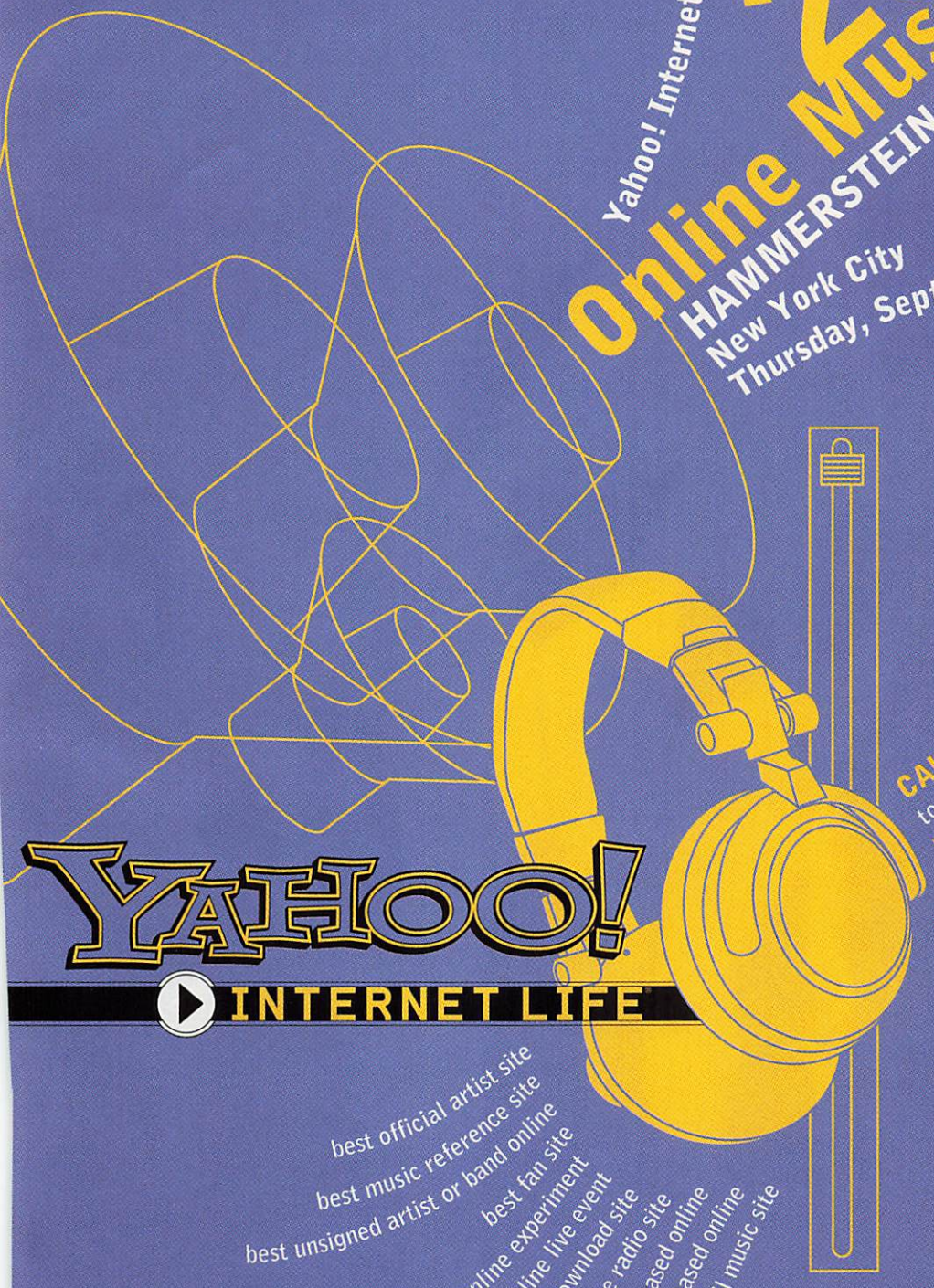
Yahoo! Internet Life

Online Music 2001 Awards

HAMMERSTEIN BALLROOM

New York City

Thursday, September 20, 2001



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COVER STORY

The People's Net

The Internet is back. That's right: alive and well. Not slumping or waning, slowing up or winding down. It may be a little shell-shocked, but that's only because it's just won a war

BY DOUGLAS RUSHKOFF

To those of us who really love it, the Internet is looking and feeling more social, more alive, more participatory, and more, well, more Internet-y than ever before. This might sound surprising, given the headlines proclaiming the official bursting of the technology bubble. Likewise, analysts on the financial cable channels and the venture capitalists of Silicon Alley now shun any company whose name ends in *.com* and have moved on to more promising new buzzwords, such as *wireless*.

But the statistics fly in the face of conventional wisdom. In terms of real hours spent online and the number of people getting new accounts every day, Internet use is up. We spent an average of 20.2 hours looking at Internet sites in March 2001, up from 15.9 hours last year and 12.8 hours the year before, according to the latest data from Jupiter Media Metrix. More surprisingly, while countless dot-coms have gone under for failure to meet investor demands, e-commerce is actually up – it rose more than 30 percent compared with last year. More than 100 million Americans now buy goods and services online.

The Internet is more capable now than it ever was of supporting the vast range of individual, community, and commercial interests that hope to exploit the massive power of networking. Still, countless investors, analysts, and pundits have fallen off the Internet bandwagon.

Good riddance, I say. The experts jumping ship today can't see the Internet as anything other than an investment opportunity that has dried up. Sure, the Internet made a lot of people money, but its real promise has always been much greater than a few upward stock ticks. If we can look past the size of our 401(k) plans to the underlying strength of our fledgling networked society, all signs are actually quite good. The Internet has never been in better health.

Maybe this kind of optimism requires us to look at the Internet less as an investment opportunity and more as a new life form. That's the way we used to see it in ancient times, anyway. Back in the 2,400-baud, ASCII text era of 10 long years ago, the Internet had nothing to do with the Nasdaq Index. Until 1991, you had to sign an agreement promising not to conduct any business online just to get access to the Internet! Imagine that. It was a business-free zone.

How could such rules ever have been put in place? Because the Internet began as a public project. It was created to allow scientists at universities and government facilities to share research and computing resources. Everyone from the Pentagon to Al Gore saw the value of a universally accessible information-sharing network and invested federal funds to build a backbone capable of connecting computers around the world.

What they didn't realize was that they were doing a whole lot more than connecting computers to one another. They were connecting people, too. Before long, all those scientists who were supposed to be exchanging research or comparing data were exchanging stories about their families and comparing notes on movies. People around the world were playing games, socializing, and crossing cultural boundaries never crossed before. Since no one was using the network to discuss military technology anymore, the government turned it over to the public as best it could.

The Internet's unexpected social side effect turned out to be its incontrovertible main feature. Its other functions fall by the wayside. The Internet's ability to network human beings is its very lifeblood. It fosters communication, collaboration, sharing, helpfulness, and community. When word got out, the nerdiest among us found out first. Then came those of us whose friends were nerds. Then their friends, and so on. Someone would insist he had found something you needed to know about—the way a childhood friend lets you in on a secret door leading to the basement under the junior high school.

How many of you can remember that first time you watched that friend log on? How he turned the keyboard over to you and asked what you wanted to know, where you wanted to visit, or whom you wanted to meet? That was the moment when you got it: Internet fever. There was a whole new world out there, unlimited by the constraints of time and space, appearance and prejudice, gender and power.

It's no wonder so many people compared the 1990s Internet to the psychedelic 1960s. It seemed all we needed to do was get a person online, and he or she would be changed forever. And people were. A 60-year-old Midwestern businessman I know found himself logging on every night to engage in a conversation about Jungian archetypes. It lasted for four weeks before he realized the person with whom he was conversing was a 16-year-old boy from Tokyo.

It felt as though we were wiring up a global brain. Techno visionaries of the period, such as Ted Nelson—who coined the word *hypertext*—told us how the Internet could be used as a library for everything ever written. A musician named Jaron Lanier invented a bizarre interactive space he called "virtual reality" in which people would be able to, in his words, "really see what the other means."

The Internet was no longer a government research project. It was alive. Out of control and delightfully chaotic. What's more, it promoted an agenda all its own. It was as if using a computer mouse and keyboard to access other human beings on the other side of the monitor changed our relationship to the media and the power the media held. The tube was no longer a place that only a corporate conglomerate could access. It was Rupert Murdoch, Dan Rather, and Heather Locklear's turf no more. The Internet was *our* space.

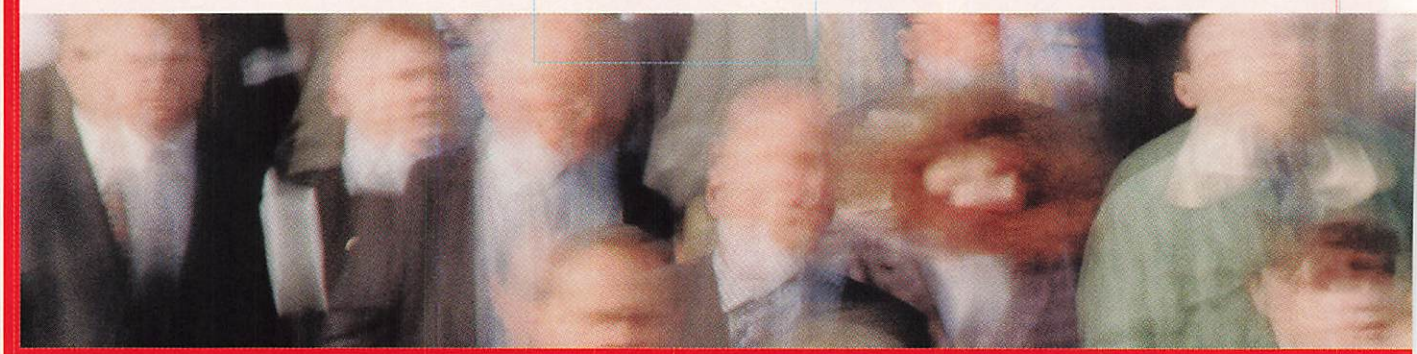
The Internet fostered a do-it-yourself mentality. We called it "cyberpunk." Why watch packaged programming on TV when you can make your own online? Who needs corporate content when you can *be* the content? This was a world we could design ourselves, on our own terms. That's why it fostered such a deep sense of community. New users were gently escorted around the Internet by veterans. An experienced user delighted in setting up a newbie's connection. It was considered an honor to rush out to fix a fellow user's technical problem. To be an Internet user was to be an Internet advocate.

It's also why almost everything to do with the Internet was free. Software was designed by people who wanted to make the Internet a better place. Hackers stayed up late coding new programs and then distributed them free of charge. In fact, most of the programs we use today are based on this shareware and freeware. Internet Explorer and Netscape are fat versions of a program created at the University of Illinois. Streaming media is a dolled-up version of CUSeeMe, a program developed at Cornell. The Internet was built for love, not profit.

And that was the problem—for business, anyway. Studies showed a correlation between time spent on the Internet and time *not* spent consuming TV programs and commercials. Something had to be done.

Thus began the long march to turn the Internet into a profitable enterprise. It started with content. Dozens, then hundreds, of online magazines sprang up. But no one wanted to pay a subscription charge for content. It just wasn't something

Until 1991, you had to sign an agreement promising not to conduct any business online just to get access to the Internet! Imagine that. It was a business-free zone



CAROLINE PURSER/GETTYONE

one did online. So most of these magazines went out of business.

The others...well, they invented the next great Internet catastrophe: the banner ad. Web publishers figured they could sell a little strip atop each page to an advertiser, who'd use it as a billboard for commercials. But everyone hated them. They got in the way. And the better we got at ignoring banner ads, the more distractingly busy they grew, and the more time-consuming they were to download. They only taught us to resent whichever advertiser was inhibiting our movement.

So advertising gave way to e-commerce. The Internet would be turned into a direct-marketing platform. An interactive mail-order catalog! This scheme seemed to hold more promise for Wall Street investors. Not many of these e-commerce businesses actually made money, but they looked as if they could someday. Besides, Wall Street cares less about actual revenue and more about the ability to create the perception that there might be revenue at some point in the future. That's why it's called speculation. Others might call it a pyramid scheme.

Here's how it works: Someone writes a business plan for a new kind of e-commerce company. That person finds "angel investors"—very in-the-know people who give him money to write a bigger business plan and hire a CEO. Then come the first and second rounds, where other, slightly less in-the-know people invest a few million more. Then come the institutional investors, who underwrite the now-infamous IPO. After that, at the bottom of the pyramid, come retail investors. That's you and me. We're supposed to log on to an e-trading site and invest our money, right when the investors at the top are executing their "exit strategy." That's another way of saying carpetbagging.

What's all that got to do with the Internet, you ask? Exactly. The Internet was merely the sexy word, the come-hither, the bright idea at the top of the pyramid. Sure, there were and still are lots of entrepreneurs creating vibrant online businesses. But the Internet was not born to support the kind of global economic boom that venture capitalists envisioned. And by turning its principal use from socializing to monetizing, business went against the Internet's very functionality.

People doing what comes naturally online—such as sending messages to one another—doesn't generate revenue. The object of the game, for Internet business, was to get people's hands off the keyboard and onto the mouse. Less collaboration, more consumption. Sites were designed to be "sticky" so people wouldn't leave. And "information architecture" turned into the science of getting people to click on the Buy button.

Anyone logging on to the Internet for the first time in the year 2000 encountered a place very different from the interactive playground of 10 years earlier. Browsers and search engines alike were designed to keep users either buying products or consuming

Now + Then

OUR CRITICAL EYE COLUMNIST DOES SOME ONLINE GARDENING AND DISCOVERS WHICH SITES WERE WEEDS, AND WHICH ONES CONTINUE TO GROW BY ROGER EBERT

There is a loneliness on the Web. No one is home at many of my bookmarks. Sites report the deaths of their competitors, and then they fold, too. It is like reading journals found on lifeboats, telling how some people died quickly, others lingered; a few bit the flesh of their comrades.

A year ago the Web seemed bursting with activity; all human life was there. Now the Web is like the campus during summer school. The same landmarks still stand, the same sidewalks cross the quad, but—where is everybody?

This is the season of testing and regrouping. The sites that have disappeared, we realize, were not really there anyway. They only seemed to be. They were built on false optimism and shaky premises. They were not about what they said they were about; they were about making money. When the money was no longer to be made, the sites dried up and blew away. Two years ago, old-economy companies added *dot-com* to their names. Now dot-coms remove *dot-com* from their names.

I go into the closet and find an old PowerBook and look at the bookmarks I was using three years ago. The sites that are gone are also forgotten. Bookshelves—gone, and I didn't even notice, because I was doing business at Amazon.com. Excite! Clubs—gone. RoughCut—out of business.

The survivors sail on through the storm. *Slate*, *Salon.com* (wondering about its new pay section), My Yahoo!, the Internet Movie Database, Google, Rotten Tomatoes, Amazon, Wired News, *Inside* (now rolled into *Brill's Content*), eBay, *The Wall Street Journal*, Napster (one way or another), the Drudge Report (whose headlines edge closer every day to those of *The Onion*).

New sites have elbowed onto my Favorites bar: Jim Romenesko's MediaNews, Plastic, iFilm, Readerville, AdCritic.com, Arts & Letters Daily, the Mercury Center's personalized comics page (the famous three rocks turned up in the background of *Nancy* today, and that plus a cup of coffee can keep me smiling until past 10 o'clock).

People are actually spending about twice as much time on the Web as three years ago, but they don't

Now + Then

talk about it so much. We have dialed down on the subject. The Web is not a new global nervous system, and we do not live in cyberspace – we live in the same old space.

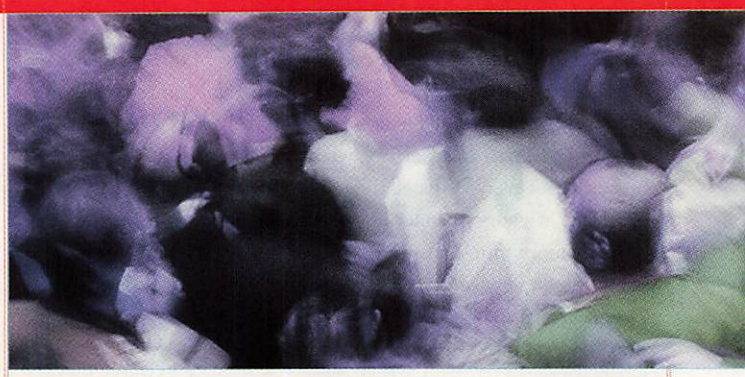
But we are more in touch because of the Web. We read the newspapers in a different way, because we have access to most of the same information the editors do. *Slate* runs an analysis claiming the Republicans are spinning the Florida media recount, and two days later we read the spin, and already know it is the spin, and wonder why the newspaper is printing the story, instead of the story about the story.

A kid shoots up a school in San Diego, and we notice how eerie the coverage is, how the kids seem media-savvy, and the county supervisor says, "We will be stronger as a result of it." We go to the Web and find that *Salon.com* is writing about how school shootings no longer prompt incoherent grief but sound bites that seem rehearsed, because they were learned from the coverage of previous shootings. That night on the TV news, the tragedy is reported on autopilot ("counseling centers," "warning signs") and we know that the real story is not about school shootings, but about how TV has made them into a news ritual. "What causes kids to open fire like this?" the reporters ask, but they do not give the most likely answer: "Because they want to be on shows like this."

This is the season of testing and regrouping. The sites that have disappeared were not really there anyway. They were built on false optimism and shaky premises

The Web has become internalized. It is our primary information source. We are not inside cyberspace, but we are inside the news. The shakeout is pretty much over. The gold rush didn't pan out. The latest search for El Dorado has ended like the others, with conquistadores belly-up on rafts filled with chattering monkeys.

All civilizations rise on the ashes of those they replace, and the Web now stands on the ruins of the hype, the bubble, the buying panic, the selling panic, the *dot-this* and *dot-that*. Now the Web is discovering that after what doesn't work has failed, what survives must be what *does* work.



HARRY SIEPLINGA/HMS IMAGES/GETTYONE

commercial content. Most of those helpful hackers were now vested employees of dot-com companies. And most visions of the electronic future had dollar signs before them.

But the real Internet was hiding underneath this investment charade the whole time. It was a little harder to find, perhaps, and few in the mainstream press were writing about it anymore. Nevertheless, plenty of people were still sharing stories, e-mailing relatives, finding new communities, and educating themselves.

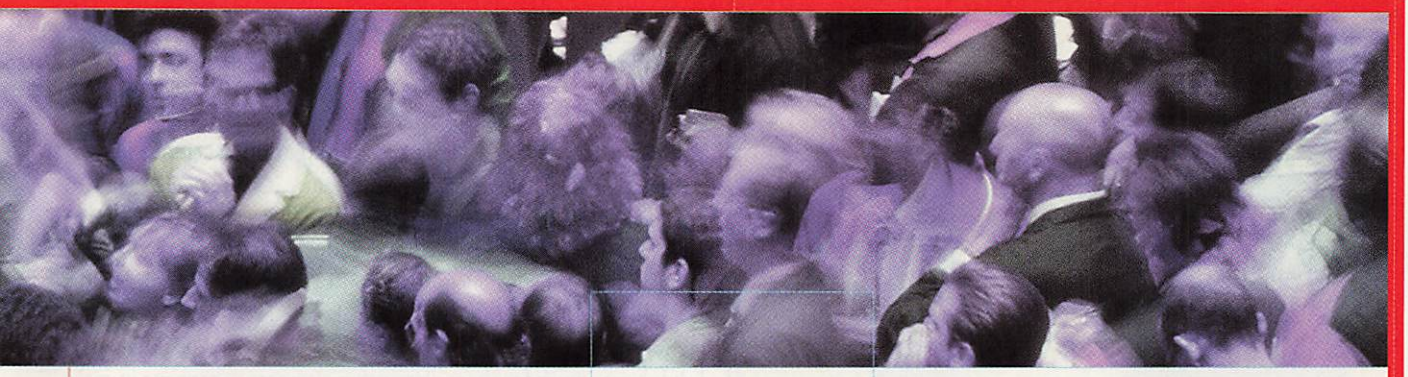
This is why so many of the business schemes were doomed to fail. The behavior control being implemented by more nefarious online merchants, the mercenary tactics of former hackers, and the commercial priorities of the Internet's investors were a blatant contradiction of the Internet's true nature. Sure, the Internet could support some business guests, the way a tree can support some mushrooms at its base and a few squirrels in its branches. But businesses attacked the Internet like men with chain saws. They needed to be rejected.

The inevitable collapse of the dot-com pyramid was not part of some regular business cycle. And it most certainly was not the collapse of anything having to do with the Internet. No, what we witnessed was the Internet fending off an attack. It's no different from when the government abandoned the Internet in the '80s, after scientists online began talking about science fiction instead of defense contracts. The Internet never does what it's *supposed* to do. It has a mind, and life, of its own. That's because we're alive, too.

Now that the Internet's role in business has faded into the background, the many great applications developed to make our lives better are taking center stage. They are compelling, and surpass some of our wildest dreams of what the Internet might someday achieve. This past spring, for example, as one dot-com after another was folding, M.I.T. announced a new Web curriculum. This leading university promised that, over the next 10 years, it will carry online the lecture notes, course outlines, and assignments for almost all of its 2,000 courses in the sciences, humanities, and arts. Instituting a policy that would make an Internet investor shudder, M.I.T. plans to release all of this material, to anyone in the world, for free.

Or have a look at **Blogger [blogger.com]**. It's not just a Web site; it's also a set of publishing tools that allows even a novice to create a Weblog, automatically add content to a Web site, or organize links, commentary, and open discussions. In the short time Blogger has been available, it has fostered an interconnected community of tens of thousands of users. These people don't simply surf the Web; they are now empowered to create it.

Taking their cue from old-school Internet discussion groups like Usenet, Web sites such as **MetaFilter [metafilter.com]** let people begin



discussions about almost anything they've found online. Each conversation begins with a link, then grows as far as its participants can take it. This is the real beauty of hypertext, and it's finally catching on. Although hackers have used bulletin board interfaces on sites such as **Slashdot [slashdot.org]** since the Web's inception, more commercially minded endeavors—e.g., **Plastic [plastic.com]**—are adopting the same model to generate dialogues about culture and media.

On Yahoo! the biggest growth area is conversation. **Yahoo! Groups [groups.yahoo.com]**, a set of bulletin board discussions and mailing lists, contains thousands of the best discussions happening online—and almost all of them have been started by real people. Based on an old but still widely used style of e-mail conversation called Listserv, it allows group members to read postings and add to the conversation without ever opening their browsers. Some of these special-interest groups are narrowcast to a degree possible only on a global network where people interested in anything from absinthe drinking to zither tuning can find one another across great distances.

It's no wonder so many people compared the 1990s Internet to the psychedelic 1960s. It seemed all we needed to do was get a person online and he or she would be changed forever

And now that international trade and open markets are no longer the Internet's chief global agenda, more humanitarian efforts are taking shape. Back in 1999, my friend Paul Meyer helped launch Internet Project Kosovo (IPKO) just days after NATO stopped shelling the Serbs. A single satellite dish let Albanian refugees find lost family members, and enabled aid agencies to allocate their resources. Today, Meyer and others are helping people in this and other war-torn and developing regions to network, and even open businesses.

For those whose refugee status ended long ago, Ellis Island has teamed with the Mormon Church to create a database containing arrival records for the 22 million immigrants who came through the New York port between 1892 and 1924. Linked databases, accessible to anyone via the Internet. Is this starting to sound familiar?

Or remember how the Internet was supposed to provide us with alternative sources of news and information? Although it was almost lost under the avalanche of content during the dot-com gold rush, **AlterNet [alternet.org]** has emerged as a vibrant source of news and opinions you won't see in your evening paper anytime soon. It's the ultimate alternative newsweekly, available on the Web or by e-mail, using the Internet to collect and syndicate content from sources that just couldn't get published any other way. And it's free.

It's not that the original Internet community went into some sort of remission. No, not all. While e-commerce customers were waiting for return authorization numbers for misordered merchandise from Pets.com, the participants in AOL's chatrooms were exchanging tips on caring for their Chihuahuas. While **DoubleClick [doubleclick.com]** was reckoning with plummeting click-through rates on its banner ads, the personal ads in the **Nerve [nerve.com]** singles classifieds were exploding. While the value of many E*Trade portfolios was falling into the red, people who'd never sold anything before were making money peddling items through the auctions on **eBay [ebay.com]**.

Likewise, as headlines panicked investors about the failure of broadband, the massive communities built on IRC chat channels and other early live networking platforms were finding new, more advanced avenues for social and intellectual exchange. For-profit streaming media companies like Icebox may have failed, but the streaming technologies they used have survived and flourished as social tools such as iVisit and NetMeeting. And while the client lists of business-to-business service companies have shrunk, peer-to-peer networks, from Napster to Hotline, still grow in popularity and resist all efforts to quell the massive exchange of data, illegal or not.

In fact, the average American home now has more information and broadcast resources than a major television network newsroom did in the '70s. A single Apple laptop is a video production studio, allowing even for the complex editing of independent films. Add a fast Internet connection, and a home producer can broadcast around the globe. My own Aunt Sophie, armed with a scanner and e-mail account, has inundated the family with photos of all our relatives' new babies.

Independent radio stations run through DSL and cable modems out of studio apartments around the world find loyal audiences through **Shoutcast [shoutcast.com]** and other amateur media networks. And, as the word *amateur* suggests, these stations are born out of love for a particular genre of music. They allow aficionados from anywhere to enjoy their favorite styles—from raga to reggae—round the clock.

The early Internet was often compared to the Wild West—an anarchic realm where a lone hacker could topple any empire—and that spirit of independence still dominates the culture of the interactive space. Any group or individual, however disenfranchised, can serve as the flash point for an extraordinarily widespread phenomenon.

Online sensations—such as the spoof of the Japanese video game at **All Your Base Are Belong to Us! [allyourbase.org]** and the parody of Budweiser's "Wassup?" commercial at **Budwizer.com: Wassup Page [budwizer.com/wassup.html]**—are launched by teenagers and distributed by e-mail to millions of office cubicles, eventually finding their way to the evening news. Think about it: The CONTINUED ON PAGE 121

A.I. + I

How a movie promo turned a curious Web surfer into an obsessed Web sleuth

BY JOSH ROBERTSON

THE A.I. MINI-WEB familychan.org | ita-es.ro | donu-tech.com | bangaloreworldu-in.co.nz | metropolitanlivinghomes.com | | electric-toyland.com | cybertronics-corp.net | 7to1.net

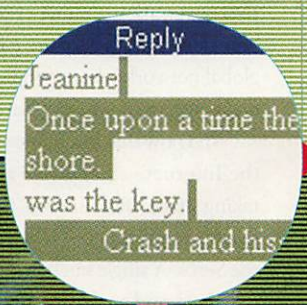
You've probably heard a little something about a science fiction movie called *A.I.: Artificial Intelligence*. Because it's directed by Steven Spielberg and had been on the late Stanley Kubrick's to-do list for a quarter century, you've probably heard a lot.

Still, I was a little concerned when I saw the film's trailer, with Haley Joel Osment's timid "Please make me a real boy" reminding me too much of "E.T., phone home" and "I see dead people." And I didn't care much for the trailer's other attempts to rope me in with its gimmicky admonition, "WARNING: Do not activate the seven-word code." C'mon, now. I hadn't fallen for "Who Is Darkman?" or "Are You Unbreakable?" so I wasn't about to go mental over "Cirrus Socrates Particle Decibel Hurricane Dolphin Tulip."

But in early April, someone tipped off Harry Knowles, honcho of the movie fan site **Ain't It Cool News [aintitcool.com]**, to an odd credit in the trailer: "Sentient Machine Therapist: Jeanine Salla." A Google search on her name had turned up her home page, **Jeanine Salla [bangaloreworldu-in.co.nz/salla]**; running a **Whois.net** search on that page unearthed a dozen others—all describing people and places in the year 2142: the **Salla family Web site [familiasalla-es.ro]**, the **Anti-Robot Militia [unite-and-resist.org]**, **Emancipation for All [inourimage.org]**.

WHAT THE FUSS IS ABOUT

The Evan Chan mystery is, alas, too byzantine to explain in one or two pages—that's why we're not even going to try. Newbies should visit **In Memoriam: Evan Chan [for-evan.com]**, which features both a FAQ-style outline of the saga and a linear retelling of it. The site also provides key links to all the important sites. In the meantime, here are some of the tricks the storytellers are using to suck users in.



INVISIBLE INK

An e-mail to a character in the story gets a response, but it doesn't seem too helpful. It looks like a poem. But highlight the text and a secret message (thanks to white letters on a white background) appears. "Jeanine was the key," it says.

"I see fake people"

Haley Joel Osment among his own kind.

DAVID JAMES

belladerma-srl-it.ro | unite-and-resist.org | spcb.org | familiasalla-es.ro | inourimage.org | coronersweb.org | denkendeneshaus-de.dk | katenei.com | martinswintondesigns.com | thevisionary.net | rogueretrieval.com | catskillseaviewclinic.org | sentinel-software-systems.net | cliniquedelille-fr.dk | aleph-naught.org | rational-hatter.com |

By this point, you're probably yawning, because either 1) you have no idea what I'm talking about, you haven't visited these sites, and you couldn't care less about them; or you 2) know exactly what I'm talking about, and the foregoing was just the nth tiresome rehash of the first steps of a vast and virtually unsolvable puzzle spread out across the Web.

I was yawning, too—at first. It seemed like yet another spin on the *Blair Witch Project* effect. But after spending some time with Spielberg's fakery, I knew this was something different. The *A.I.* mini-Web—the sphere, as the Net is called in 2142—hooks you in rather devious, startling ways. You hit the Back button on your browser and are bombarded by threats. You receive e-mail with secret white-on-white text. You're constantly prompted to log in to this or that site—if you can just guess the password.

So, what's it all about? The online *A.I.* story line (which appears to be related only tangentially to what we'll see in theaters on June 29) is about the death of Evan Chan, an expert in biothermal analysis. He takes (*took? will take?*) his boat, the *Cloudmaker*, out off the coast of Durham, North Carolina (the coast of *what?*), in the year 2142—and then washes up dead, his brains bashed in. Who did it? No one knows. It's the Net's job to find out.

The film itself apparently takes place a century before the Evan Chan mystery. In fact, the sites around the Evan Chan mystery contain no references to the movie at all. Start at one page, go to another, and another. There's no link to the official site, **A.I.: Artificial Intelligence [aimovie.com]**. The *A.I.* mini-Web is a marketing gimmick for the movie, but I'll be damned if I can find an actual sales pitch.

In fact, whatever its original intent, the Evan Chan mystery is no longer just marketing. It's the *Citizen Kane* of online interactive entertainment, and—yes—art. Here we have sites, images, sounds, words, plot, nuance, intrigue—a ripping good and often poetic yarn that's as much a work of art as any novel or movie.

The mystery is a game that reads like a great story, and a story that plays out like a great game, and none of it would be possible in any medium other than the Internet. We're witnessing the birth of a new kind of art here, and whoever's behind it—the so-called Puppetmasters—have set the bar quite high.

How so? The first time I ran into a real *A.I.* puzzle I was completely stumped, so I turned to the **Cloudmakers [groups.yahoo.com/group/cloudmakers]**, discoverers of clues and solvers of puzzles. This mystery isn't solvable by a single human. The Puppetmasters have made it so complex and real that it could exist only on the Web, and they've made it difficult enough that it may take the entire Web to solve it. There's not just one supra-genius Sherlock type working on this case—there are several thousand.

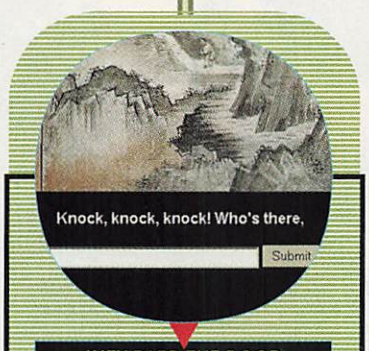
I joined the Cloudmakers the day I found out about the *A.I.* sites and was promptly deluged with about 500 e-mails within 24 hours. (That's when I decided to just read the posts at the group's Yahoo! page.) All told, I'm probably devoting at least two hours a day to the Evan Chan mystery. New puzzles appear, and sometimes they're solved before I even know they exist. Other puzzles linger, mocking us. Will there ever be a point at which every piece of the story makes sense? Will it make more sense after I've seen the movie? Less? I wonder.

Regardless, I'm obsessed with this challenge, and I'm not alone. While the game itself is seductive and exciting, there's an even more exciting, larger phenom at work: collective brain power. At times in the pages of this magazine we examine ideas like "distributed intelligence" and "the swarm"—the Net as a great hive of thought, buzzing with the contributions of the many who are thinking as one super-intelligent entity: each person a neuron firing in a massive virtual brain. We've seen it before, but I don't know if we've ever seen it to this extent.

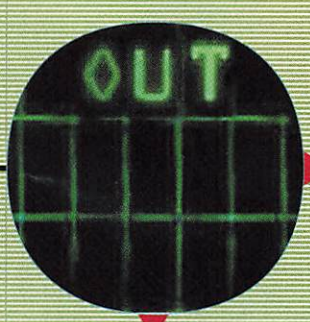
Although I've posted a few ideas to the Cloudmakers group, I have yet to contribute anything useful—but since the group has 2,500 members, and we've solved maybe 50 puzzles, I don't feel exceptionally useless. And someday, who knows—maybe it'll be my turn to have the epiphany.

But, you may ask, will the movie be any good?

What movie? ■

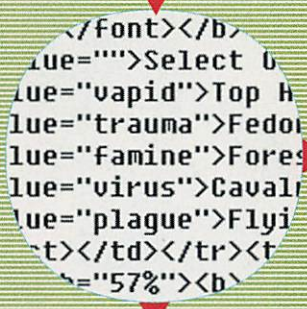


KATY BARD THE DOOR
It's a line from Shakespeare. Finish it and you're in.



WARNING
Someone – or something – doesn't like you snooping around. "GET OUT," the message says. "THEY ARE SMARTER THAN YOU. YOU WOULD BE BROKEN."

POSTERIZE
The PDA found on a dead man shows a blank green screen with the message "bio-optic filtering enabled." Playing around with it with a basic photo-editing program uncovers some critical data.



CODE WORDS
You don't have to be an HTML expert to know something's fishy in this source document for the Rational Hatter site. Famine? Virus? Plague?

IDENTIFY!
You've found the secret entrance to a hacker group's pages. "Are you a man or are you a mouse?" it asks you. Neither answer is correct. You're a Mowz – but can you find the link?

Photographs by Eric Tucker

Most Incredibly Useful Sites

Our annual roundup of sites that help you do something: They may not be the Web's biggest or best-known, but they offer true utility with an interactive twist. All 50 are new to the list this year, so we've boxed some of our classics here and included more—101 in total—online at yil.com

BY RICHARD BUTNER

SET: EDWARD MURPHY; WARDROBE STYLIST: DONNA CASEY; GROOMING: MARTIN CHRISTOPHER; CLOTHING: DIESEL.COM

travel

FIND THE PERFECT CAMPSITE

National Park Guide

www.nps.gov/parks.html

Break away from that computer once in a while and enjoy one of our national parks—your tax dollars are paying for their upkeep, after all. Search for parks by name, location, or activities, get the lowdown, and make reservations (early!) for those coveted summer campground spots.

GET DIRECTIONS

MapBlast!

mapblast.com

Can't get there from here? Yes, you can—just enter your point A and point B. Try the unique LineDrive directions to get a handy combination of text and graphics to display your route, and check out the site's wireless section to see how it can help you when you're traveling.

SPOT YOUR SUBWAY

MetroPlanet

metropla.net

No matter what city you find yourself in, taking mass transit is usually cheaper and faster than taking a taxi. Learn about subway/metro systems, with maps of 21 mass transit systems in the U.S. and dozens more from around the world, everywhere from Buenos Aires to Beijing.

TRAVEL ABROAD SAFELY

U.S. Department of State: Travel and Living Abroad

state.gov/travel

Before you head overseas, check in with the State Department to find out about travel warnings for global hot spots or to get information on passports or immunizations. Even if you're headed for a relatively safe country, you can find basic information on traffic, crime, and medical facilities.

GET THE BEST ROOM

Quikbook

quikbook.com

Plenty of travel sites can help you book a decent hotel room, but Quikbook goes upscale, giving you the lowest rates in quality hotels, so you won't end up in some dive just because you want to save a few bucks. Each hotel listing gives you "Q Ratings" that score the hotel and room features, service levels, and business amenities.

ZOOM IN ON YOUR DESTINATION

Fodors.com

fodors.com

Select a world region and then a specific destination to get a mini-guide, so you'll know where to eat in Ft. Lauderdale or shop in Paris. You'll also find feature articles on avoiding airplane fears and digging up hotel deals, and there are plenty of message boards where you can ask or answer questions about your favorite vacation spots.

reference

SET YOUR WATCH

TimeTicker

timeticker.com

Do your VCR, microwave, computer, and alarm clocks all disagree on the time? Check in at TimeTicker to find out the correct time at your house and around the world. One tip: Turn off the ticking sound effects—they'll drive you crazy in a matter of seconds.

LEARN ANYTHING

FindTutorials.com

findtutorials.com

Learn how to knot a bow tie, host a baby shower, drive a stick shift, or any of thousands of other skills in dozens of categories by following the links to free lessons, including those at Learn2.com. Can't find what you're looking for? Try posting your requests to the Wish List forum.

CHECK YOUR FACTS

Bartleby.com: Reference

bartleby.com/reference

Cancel that trip to the library. Make Bartleby your reference desk and save time and gas. You'll find the searchable text of a shelf full of reference works, including dictionaries, encyclopedias, thesauri, and usage guides.

ASK UNCLE SAM

FedStats

www.fedstats.gov

Thousands of bureaucrats spend your tax money collecting facts and figures on just about everything. Get some return on your investment. Whether you want stats on drug crimes, railroad accidents, or poultry populations, here's your window into an endless universe of federal data. Search by keyword, topic, state, or agency to get surveys, reports, and—you guessed it—stats.

GET TECH HELP

Tech Support Guy

helponthe.net

Tired of being put on hold on tech-support phone lines, paying dearly for every minute until you get to speak with some frontline staffer who's still wet behind the ears? Take your question to these busy message boards. Post your issue or search by keyword to see if someone's already solved your problem.

CHECK THE ALMANAC

Infoplease.com: Almanac Search

infoplease.com/almanacs.html

It's an encyclopedia. It's a dictionary. It's an atlas. It's all three. Find information ranging from the colors of the Ukranian flag to a list of Supreme Court chief justices to conversion factors between metric and U.S. equivalents. It's just like the book your parents used to have on the shelf, but it's much easier to browse.

ACE YOUR KIDS' HOMEWORK

StudyWeb

www.studyweb.com

Are you more afraid of your children's homework than they are? If there's a book report on Shakespeare or a page of geometry proofs looming in your future, StudyWeb is the place to find helpful sites for further research. Drill down by topic or search by keyword from the thousands of sites listed.

LEARN A LANGUAGE

Transparent Language

transparent.com

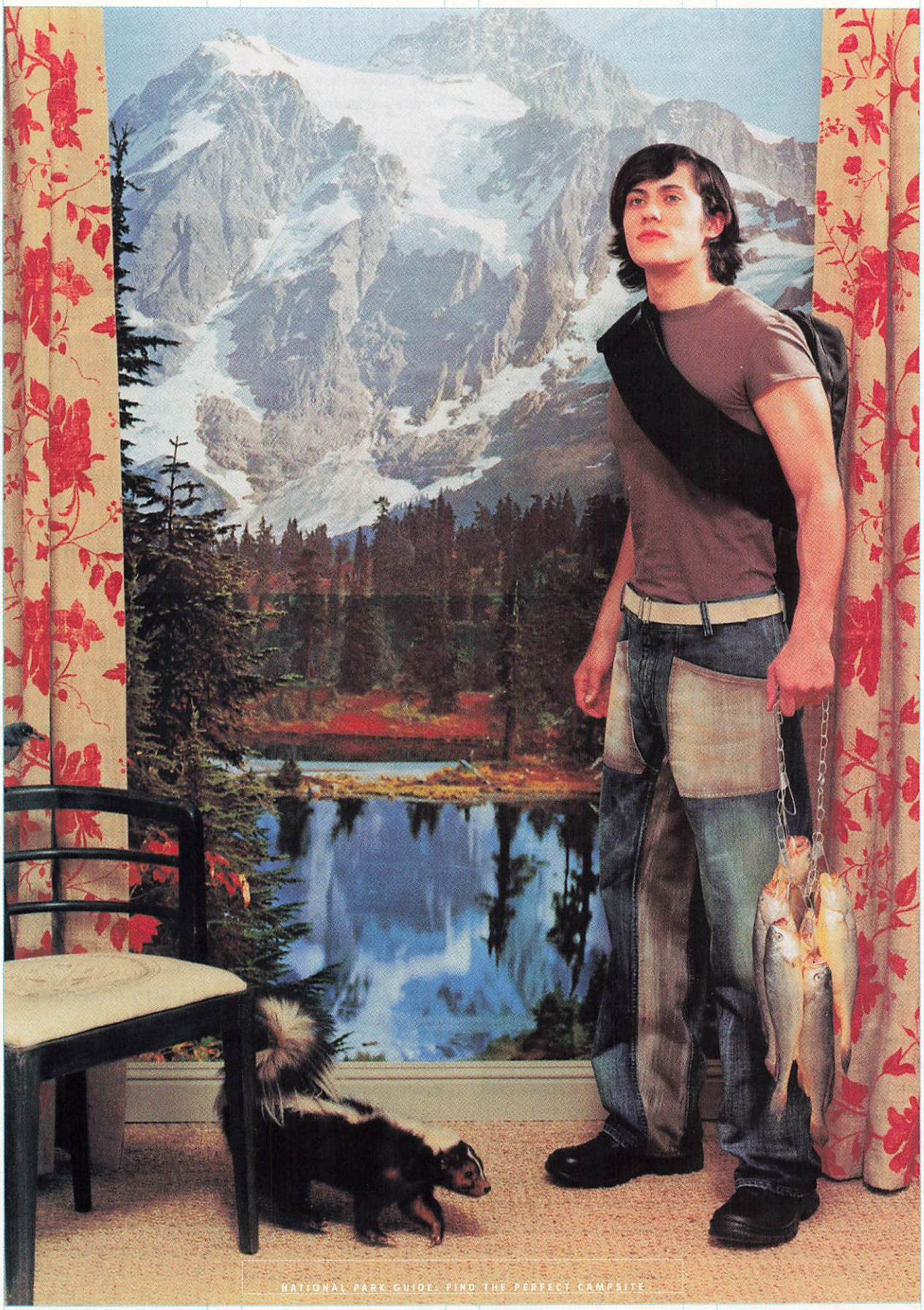
Even if you never plan on leaving home, learning a second language can still help you get your order right in an uptight French restaurant. Get handy tools and quizzes to boost your skills in dozens of tongues, including Irish, Polish, and even Latin.

EXPLORE THE WORLD

NationalGeographic.com: Maps & Geography

nationalgeographic.com/maps

Build zoomable maps of any point on the globe and access atlas information at this delightfully interactive site. Dynamic maps let you wander all over the world and take a close look at anything that catches your eye. You can shop for beautiful printed maps here, too.



NATIONAL PARK GUIDE: FIND THE PERFECT CAMPSITE

SOME CLASSICS: SUPREMELY USEFUL SITES

STAY HEALTHY
CBSHealthWatch by Medscape
cbs.medscape.com
No Web site is a substitute for a trip to the doctor, but for health tips and basic research you can't beat this collection. Find out about first aid, medical tests, or drugs and drug interactions.

BUY A CAR
CarsDirect.com
carsdirect.com
Research cars, get dealer pricing, and – if you want to take the plunge – go ahead and buy. You'll still have to go to your local dealer to pick up your new car, but overall, the process couldn't be smoother.

FIND A MUTUAL FUND
Morningstar.com
morningstar.com
Ignore your friends' advice. Check out the star ratings here. If your portfolio is full of five-star funds, you're all set for retirement. Probably.

CHECK THE WEATHER
Weather.com
weather.com
Customize your local forecast to take into account your upcoming travels or to show health-specific information, such as pollen levels.

GET A JOB
Monster.com
monster.com
This one-stop career center provides advice, countless job listings, interview coaching, and a place to store your résumé and leads.

BOOK YOUR TRAVEL
Expedia.com
expedia.com
Travelocity.com
travelocity.com
Book your flight, your hotel room, and your car through these sites' always improving interfaces. They ran neck and neck in our last travel test (with Travelocity winning by a nose). You needn't look elsewhere to handle any of your basic travel needs.

EXPLORE A CITY
Citysearch.com
citysearch.com
What's the best dive bar in New Orleans? The best record store in L.A.? How about the freshest sushi in New York? Find those answers and savvy, in-depth details on 34 other U.S. cities and 24 international destinations.

LOOK UP A WORD
YourDictionary.com
yourdictionary.com
Stumped by words like *stochastic* or *lexeme*? Get definitions here. If the quick lookup doesn't score, there are hundreds of other dictionaries and references to choose from.

FIND A ZIP CODE
United States Postal Service: ZIP Codes
usps.com/ncsc/lookups/lookups.htm
Make sure the mail you send

DECODE WEB PAGES
VoyCabulary
www.voycabulary.com
If you arrive at a Web page and see one or two unfamiliar words, you can always look them up. But what do you do when you encounter a site chock-full of multisyllabic words or acronyms? Process it with VoyCabulary first. Enter the URL and the dictionary or thesaurus you want to use, and VoyCabulary generates its own version of the page. Then you click on each word you want looked up.

LOOK UP LAW
Nolo: Legal Encyclopedia
nolo.com/encyclopedia
Even if you never end up in court, you'll probably bump into the legal system throughout your life. Whether you're drawing up your will or declaring bankruptcy, some research in the beginning can save you pain and hassles later on. These searchable articles turn legalese into plain English.

LAUNCH YOUR SURFING
AltaVista
av.com
If you need a fast-loading, almost graphics-free page to start your daily browsing and searching, try AltaVista's new slimmed-down look. Gone are lots of portal features it used to have. Today it's all about searching, quick language translation, and bargain hunting.

finance

GET TAX INFO
TaxPlanet.com
taxplanet.com
Stop choosing blissful ignorance when it comes to our great nation's complex tax codes. Wise up. If you're looking for strategies to ease your burden, study these hints, and not just at tax time. Tips on deductions and record keeping are useful year-round.

SCOPE OUT STOCKS
Justquotes.com
justquotes.com
Investing in individual stocks isn't for the faint of heart, especially in today's wildly turbulent markets. Get the skinny on a particular company—quotes, news, charts, analysis—before you jump over to your online broker to make a trade.

COMPARE LOW RATES
Bankrate.com
bankrate.com
It's time to make sure you're getting the best rate on your money market account, and it may be time to refinance your mortgage. This site surveys thousands of financial institutions in all 50 states to help you find the best loan and credit card rates. So grab another credit card. It's the American way.

TRADE ONLINE FASTER THAN EVER
SmartMoney.com: Broker Meter
smartmoney.com/brokermeter
Having a tough time getting through to make your electronic stock trades? Find a less poky broker by checking these rankings. Choose from a variety of measurements and time periods to rank brokers, and then check the ratings before you make a switch.

DIG INTO CORPORATE FINANCIALS
Hoover's Online
hooversonline.com
Some of the richly detailed content at this leading business research service will cost you (there are records about literally millions of private companies), but the capsule summaries about specific companies and general sectors of the economy are free. Day traders depend on Hoover's.

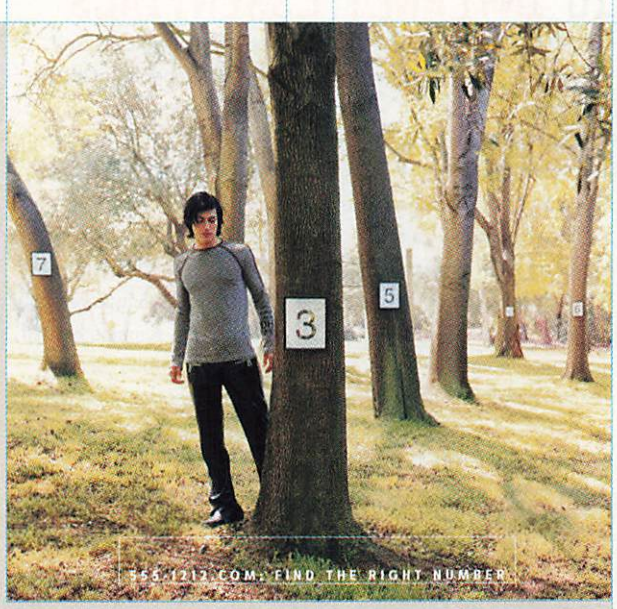
arrives safe and sound by getting the ZIP code right.

LOOK UP ANYONE
555-1212.com
555-1212.com
All listed phone numbers are available. Use the reverse lookup feature to figure out who belongs to that number you scribbled down last week.

FIND FILM FACTS
The Internet Movie Database
imdb.com
To definitively settle any film- or TV-related bar bet, query this vast trivia trove of more than 260,000 movies and 950,000 cast and crew members. Also: links to reviews and schedules for your local cinema.

PRINT PHOTOS
Ofoto
ofoto.com
Our Web Lab expert crowned this photo developing and printing service as best overall. Send in your film or transmit your digital images for sharp, speedy prints, and for storage in online albums you can share with friends and family.

GET EXPERT HELP
AskMe.com
askme.com
At this advice site, post your question for free in any of scores of categories – from travel to technology, plumbing to paranormal phenomena – and wait for a pro to answer. Check the ratings to be sure of the person's know-how.



SET UP SHOP
FreeMerchant.com
freemerchant.com
Anyone who runs a small business should have some kind of Net presence, even if selling merchandise online isn't part of the plan. Start here with easy-to-follow wizards and plenty of setup templates.

CONVERT CASH
Oanda.com
oanda.com
If you need to know how many euros there are in a dollar—or how many dollars there are in a euro—do the conversion here. Of course, a site like this is most useful when you're traveling; when on the road, download its converter for your Palm or access the site via your Net-enabled cell phone.

entertainment

HIT THE CINEMA
Movies.com
movies.com
Type in your ZIP code to find reviews and show times for current features, all arranged on a single convenient page, or watch trailers for upcoming blockbusters; there are reviews of DVDs and videos, too.

FIND WEB FLICKS
iFilm
ifilm.com
Click on Advanced Search to find thousands of online films from hundreds of sources (not just iFilm). Design your own thematic short film festivals in 60 genres, including erotica and *Star Wars*. You'll have to hunch over your computer to watch, but for movies like *American Jedi* and *The Killer Bean 2*, it'll be worth it.

GET A DATE
Match.com
match.com
More than 1,000 couples who have married after meeting at this leading online dating service would no doubt call it extremely useful. Just create an appealing profile of yourself, upload a photo, activate the Venus search agent and ask it to e-mail you when it makes a match based on your preferences—then sit back and see who turns up. It's a lot less smoky than a bar, and at $99.95 for an annual membership, it's a cost-effective way to start filling up your little black book.

CHECK THE STANDINGS
ESPN.com
espn.com
Sports nuts will never be bored with this site's seemingly endless menu of stats and services. Get current scores and track what's going on in everything from baseball to auto racing to soccer. You'll also find chats, videos, columns, and fantasy leagues in four sports.

SET YOUR VCR
Gist TV Listings
gist.com
The people who could really use this site are probably too busy watching TV to look at it. Drag them over and show them the searchable listings, the gossip reports and TV industry headlines, and the fan clubs. Then enter their ZIP code and show them the up-to-the-minute color-coded grid for their local cable system. It's a powerful alternative to TV Guide Online.

communications

USE YOUR VOICE TO ACCESS THE WEB
Tellme
tellme.com
Tellme is the best of the voice portals, letting you dial up toll-free and use voice recognition to ask for your personalized Web info, be it headlines, stock updates, restaurant listings, or a direct line to a taxi service when you're traveling.

10 INTERNET ESSENTIALS

LOOK IT UP
Yahoo!
yahoo.com
Of course we like it. Our namesake portal (we're a licensing partner) is the place for most people to start exploring most subjects. It's the start page to end all start pages, and if your search gets more intense, it sends you to Google.

SEARCH THE WEB
Google
google.com
It's still the search engine to beat, offering up eerily accurate hits whether you use the simple or advanced search. Install the handy Google Toolbar to take powerful searching everywhere you surf.

SEARCH NEWSGROUPS
Deja Power Search
exit109.com/~jeremy/news/deja.html
Google has swallowed up Deja.com's Usenet archive, but you can still search newsgroup postings using this sleek front end.

SEARCH ALL OVER
MetaCrawler
metacrawler.com
If you're searching for something obscure, blast your query to 13 search engines at once, or search for special types of info, such as auction items, MP3 files, or images.

SEARCH BY TOPIC
CNET Search.com
search.com
Try one of the specialized searches covering topics like business, government, people, and travel. You'll find results from the "invisible Web," which typically isn't indexed by general-purpose search engines.

DISCOVER 101 INCREDIBLY USEFUL SITES AT YIL.COM/USEFUL

SURF ANONYMOUSLY
SafeWeb
safeweb.com
Maintain your online privacy (for free) by surfing here first. Your address remains hidden, no cookies end up on your hard drive, and no one will know where you've been.

GET HELP
CNET Help.com
help.com
Twenty years into the PC revolution, computers are still too hard to use. Need advice on any computing topic? Look it up in this well-organized directory or at its sister site, ZDNet.

WATCH AND LISTEN
Yahoo! Events
broadcast.com
Find broadcasts from the worlds of business, computing, and entertainment. There are scheduled events and chats as well as on-demand content.

FIND SHAREWARE
Jumbo!
jumbo.com
Whether you need a classic game or a cutting-edge business app, an unusual font or a screen saver, download it here.

MONITOR SITES
Spyonit
spyonit.com
Why browse when you can have a virtual assistant do it for you? Set up "spies" to notify you when a Web page changes, when that collectible you want goes up for auction, or when an airfare drops into your price range.

LOCATE YOUR PARCELS
SearchBug: Package Tracking
searchbug.com/packages
Where's that digital camera you ordered last week? Package tracking is a supremely useful Net service, and this site does it well, gathering tracking info from Airborne, DHL, Emery, FedEx, and UPS on one page. Especially recommended for eBay addicts.

BUILD A WEB SITE
Homestead
homestead.com
Of all the easy-to-use "drag and drop" site builders, Homestead has always been among the best. You can build your basic site for free in a matter of minutes. More options and services come into play as your site evolves, but for a quick start, this is the place to go.

health

PSYCH YOURSELF OUT
HelpCenter
helping.apa.org
You look tense—here's how to relax. Read articles about work stress, the mind–body connection, and family and relationships. Feel free to skip the pitches about psychology in everyday life and the benefits of therapy, but if you do decide that you want to find a psychologist, a toll-free number is available to link you up with one in your area.

FIND GRADE A DOCTORS
HealthGrades
healthgrades.com
How do you know you're getting top-quality health care? Check out more than 5,000 hospitals, half a million doctors, and 16,000 nursing homes, or use the site's directories to find the kind of health care professional you need.

GET HEALTH INSIGHTS
National Institutes of Health: Health Information
www.nih.gov/health
Search this fascinating collection of health reports and studies for the subject that interests you, and you'll be linked to other resources that can provide information and answer some of your questions.

home

GET INTO COLLEGE
Embark
embark.com
Getting yourself (or your kid) into a good college doesn't just require tuition. It also requires good grades, high test scores, and dazzling applications. Follow the site's helpful five-step process to find out which school will be the perfect fit.

GET SOME SHELTER
HomeScape.com
homescape.com
Should you rent or buy? HomeScape can help you make that decision and then guide you to apartment and house listings from newspapers around the country. You'll also get advice on financing your mortgage and planning your move.

GET EXPERT HELP
EXP Systems
exp.com
Your next-door neighbor may be a know-it-all when it comes to car repair and lawn maintenance, but is he an expert? Probably not. Search the advice

files for business, household, and technology-related topics, or post your question and wait to hear from one of the experts.

FIGURE OUT YOUR APPLIANCES

LiveManuals

livemanuals.com

Time to reset the answering machine. Now, where did that manual go? Don't despair. Look online to get directions and tutorials for thousands of household appliances, electronic gear, and more by make and model.

COOK WITH CLASS

Epicurious

epicurious.com

If a delicate yet flavorful blend of peanut butter and jelly is your idea of gourmet cooking, you may want to spend some time at this encyclopedic food site, which features archived recipes from *Gourmet* and *Bon Appétit*. Search for food and drink ideas for any occasion, and watch slide shows and instructional videos.

BUY A HOUSE

MSN HomeAdvisor

homeadvisor.com

Don't let your dream home elude you—track it down by searching by locale and price range. But this is more than a listing service; it's also a homeowner's portal. If you're happy with your current abode, you can find tips for repairs, interior design, and gardening.

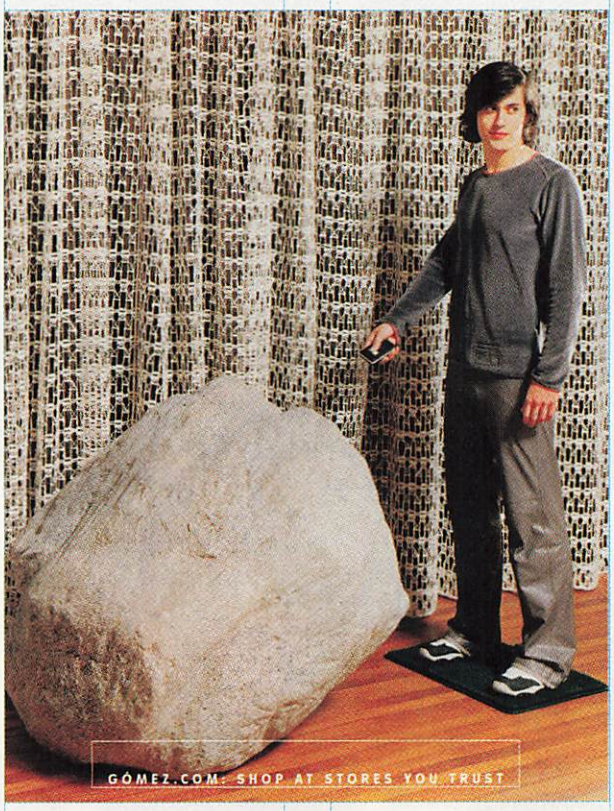
shopping

SHOP SMARTER ONLINE

Gómez.com

gomez.com

Whom can you trust? Gómez uses a rigorous methodology to evaluate online retailers, so before you hand over your credit card number to anyone, first use a little due diligence and put your mind at ease.



FIND CLEARANCE DEALS

Overstock.com

overstock.com

Everyone loves a bargain, and the best bargains are often closeout and overstock deals. Search through dozens of categories, from digital cameras to wristwatches to fitness equipment. Look around by keyword or brand name. It's hit-or-miss, but you may just luck out.

GET BUYING HELP

Active Buyer's Guide

activebuyersguide.com

Why waste time sending back bad purchases? Find the tent, PC, or refrigerator that's right for you. These step-by-step guides ask you a series of questions, and you get back a ranked list of best-fit products. Whether you're in the market for a digital camera, an online broker, or even beer, you'll get custom-tailored suggestions.

SHOP FOR RARE BOOKS

ABEbooks.com

abebooks.com

Advanced Book Exchange is the "world's largest network of independent booksellers," and it doesn't even smell musty. Easily searchable listings lead you to bookseller information. You can buy from the store or from the site; it's up to you.

RESEARCH PRODUCT RATINGS

J.D. Power Consumer Center

jdpower.com

Don't get burned by slick salespeople or so-called financial experts—check out these reputable product ratings first. When it comes to decisions about cars or finance (or travel or telecommunications), going with a J.D. Power award winner is usually a good bet.

COMPLAIN TO THE FEDS

Consumer Protection

www.ftc.gov/ftc/consumer.htm

Got a beef that's falling on deaf ears? Scream louder by filing a complaint with the Federal Trade Commission. Even if you don't need to gripe, you can still become a more informed consumer by checking out topics ranging from usury to telemarketing.

EQUIP YOUR BUSINESS

BuyerZone.com

buyerzone.com

Small-business owners often act as their own one-person purchasing department. If trips to the office-supply store are running you ragged, shop here. Submit your requests to get quotes from vendors on supplies, insurance, telecom, and marketing services.

auto

DRIVE SAFELY

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

www.nhtsa.dot.gov

Input your car's make and model and find out if you're likely to die should you hit a brick wall. This is auto safety HQ, with reams of stats and articles about how to stay alive on the highway.

GET UNDER THE HOOD

Carfax

carfax.com

Type in a vehicle ID number to find out where a used car has been and what's happened to it along the way. Most reports cost $15 to $20, but you can experiment for free. ■

Richard Butner pens *Y-Life*'s Incredibly Useful Sites column each month.

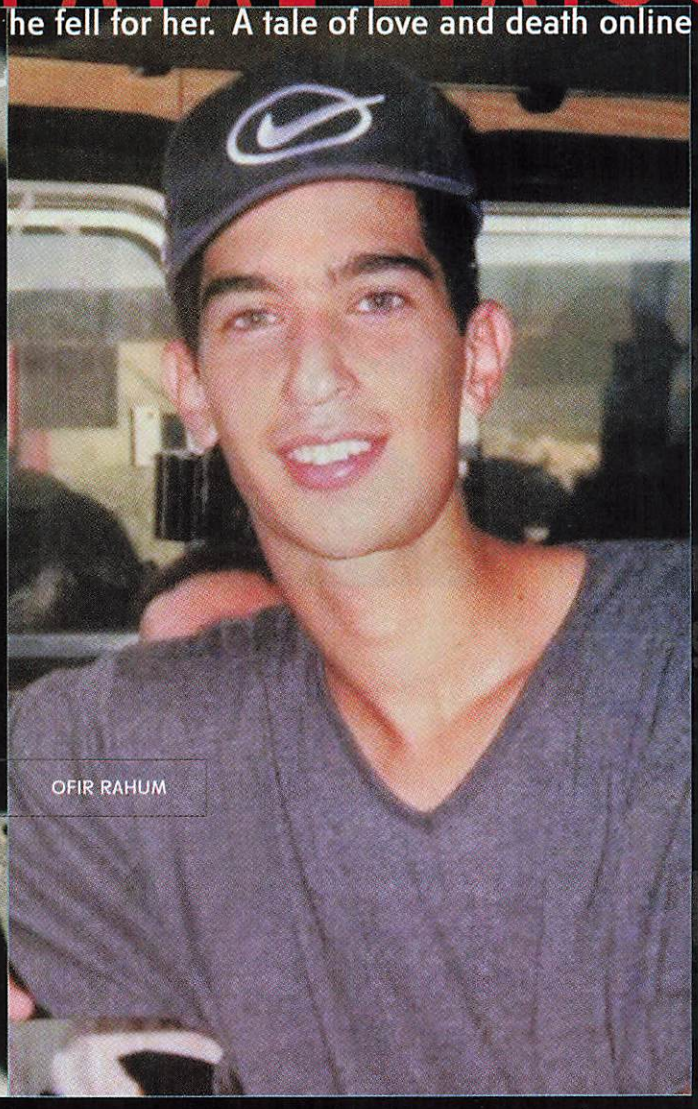
He was 16. She was 25. He was an Israeli. She was a Palestinian. But

MUNA: BRYAN MCBURNEY; RAHUM: AP/WIDE WORLD PHOTOS

FATAL LIAISON

he didn't know that when he fell for her. A tale of love and death online

AMNEH MUNA



OFIR RAHUM

One day last year, Shalom Rahum ambled into his son's room. Ofir, like so many 16-year-olds in the Internet age, had locked his attention so tightly to the goings-on of his computer screen that he was oblivious to his father's approach. And so it was that Shalom finally caught a glimpse of how Ofir spent those endless hours curled over the keyboard: instant messaging. At that moment, he was deep into a chat with a 34-year-old woman with two kids. » Shalom cautioned his son about conversing with such an inappropriate person. Of course, to a 16-year-old boy, just who is and isn't suitable can be highly subjective. Just how much more unsuitable, for example, is a married mom than a young woman with the following ICQ profile—

BY JOANNA CHEN

Name: sali ziko
Nickname: sali
Gender: Female
Age: 23
Languages: English
Country: Israel

—especially in the eyes of a shy high school junior in a small city in Israel. Especially when you can almost feel her desperation to be with him.

1/14/01 15:28
i miss you too ofir
we will talk today i hope you are coming on Wednesday...please don't say no
i need you to be with me...please

That was one of the last e-mails "Sali," whose name turned out to be Amneh Muna, sent to Ofir Rahum. She is a Palestinian. She was living in Bir Naballah. He was an Israeli. He lived in Ashkelon. Bir Naballah is only about 80 miles from Ashkelon, closer than New York City is to Philadelphia. But in his wildest dreams Ofir would not venture from his sleepy city in southern Israel to Amneh's dusty village in the heart of the Palestinian territories, a spot not far from the de facto Palestinian capital, Ramallah. These two could have met only in cyberspace.

The time was October 2000; the place, an ICQ chatroom. When Muna looked at his ICQ White Pages bio, she found this:

Name: ofir rahum
Nickname: ofir
Birth Date: 25-Jul-84
Gender: Male
Age: 16
Languages: Hebrew, English, Armenian
City: Ashkelon
Country: Israel

Ofir's online honesty, of course, may be less common than Muna's use of an alias. Like many of us, online and off, Muna, 25, lied about her age; in fact, nothing in her profile was true except her gender. She wanted to meet an Israeli boy, and given the recent state of Arab–Israeli relations, revealing her Palestinian ethnicity wouldn't get Muna far—and Muna intended to go very far. Armed with a master plan and an Internet connection, she set on a course that ended in a charge of manslaughter. It left a trail of blood—one that Israeli television has splashed into homes across the country—as well as a trail of instant messages.

Which, as it turns out, is much easier to follow.

AMNEH MUNA

Like many of us, Muna, 25, lied about her age; in fact, **nothing in her profile was true** except her gender. She wanted to meet an Israeli boy

Fueled by $3.2 billion in venture-backed investments in the year 2000, Israel is considered by many to be the world's second Silicon Valley. Its sophisticated arms industry is regarded as a leader in its field, and as a continued source of pride to the still-young state of Israel. Over a decade ago, aided even further by the massive immigration of highly trained Russian technicians and engineers, the country became a beehive of high-tech activity. Today, with more than 50,000 workers in computer-based industries, success in the high-tech market is the new dream for many young Israelis—Ofir among them.

FAMILY SNAPSHOT Ofir is flanked by his parents and siblings at his bar mitzvah.

"Welcome to Ofir Rahum's [Web] site, and thanks for surfing here. Don't forget one important thing: The site is updated daily. Tell your friends. I hope you have fun and come back soon. Have a nice day. Bye."

His sister, Louisa, a soldier in the Israeli Army, actually specializes in computer technology, but Ofir himself was a relative newcomer to the Net—unlike many of his high school buddies, who were hooked in long before him. He built his Web site—3d-il.com—as if making up for lost time, spending an average of four to six hours a day at his PC. Much of that time was spent working alone on the site, expanding his personal domain. It's packed full of teenage dreams and interests: cracks and trainers for the latest computer games, the words to Eminem and Jennifer Lopez hits, and detailed lists of local sports heroes. Known among his close friends as a comedian, Ofir also devoted a section to jokes he'd collected.

Back in December of last year, Rahum also added an ICQ members club to his list. The first entry is his own: "I'm the owner of this Web site. Come sign up." Hundreds of Israeli teenagers joined, many hoping to find their dream date this way.

"Salsa dancing, having fun and of course computers." Ronit, 16 (f)

"I just wanted to say the idea of this members' club is a great one." Nisan, 17 (m)

"If you're between 14–16, you've come to the right place. Leave a message." Nava, 14 (f)

A handsome boy with coal-black hair and blue eyes, Ofir had always

MUNA: NEWSCOM; BAR MITZVAH PHOTOS: COURTESY RAHUM FAMILY

OFIR RAHUM

'If I don't show up for class tomorrow, **be happy for me**,' Ofir told classmates the day before he met 'Sali' in person for the first time

been painfully shy around girls. When his friends packed off to nightclubs on weekends, he preferred to hang out at home, watching TV with his siblings or surfing the Net. One of four children, he lived with his parents in a four-room apartment in a nondescript high-rise on the coast. His father is an electrician; his mother, a homemaker. He visited his grandmother every weekend and never missed traditional Sabbath dinner.

Ofir lived a sheltered life, something Muna clued in on as she got to know him through a rapidly escalating series of online conversations. He had never been abroad, and visited Jerusalem only once, on a school trip.

And the young man had no reason to distrust the woman he knew as Sali. She masterfully covered any fault lines in her made-up identity. During one of their chats, when Ofir asked if she knew Hebrew, Muna responded: "I know [Hebrew] but not that well coz we came from Morocco and I am only one year in Israel." Plausible enough. Israel is, after all, a melting pot of cultures and nationalities; there is a high percentage of Moroccan-born Israelis living in the country today. Besides, he was too shy, too afraid of chasing off his exciting new friend, to barrage her with cynical questions. Ofir wanted to believe, and he was the kind of guy who took small steps.

```
ofir    hi
sali    hi ofir
ofir    how r u
sali    i am fine. i miss you ofir
ofir    i miss you too...
```

Amneh Muna was in fact not from Morocco but from the West Bank. A fledgling reporter for a local rag called *al-Snobar*, she worked in Ramallah, a gray, hunkered-down city subjected to scores of bombings by the Israeli Air Force. Ramallah is also ground zero for many of the violent demonstrations against Israeli occupation.

Not surprisingly, then, Ramallah is surrounded by both Israeli and Palestinian checkpoints. Commuting to and from the city can be a nightmare; residents must show identity cards to the appropriate authorities and submit to frequent body searches. Israelis approaching the area risk being assaulted by rock-throwers or shot by snipers.

Muna lived with her parents and three siblings in a spacious, free-standing house surrounded by fragrant pear and apple trees. Cats stretch out on the front stoop. Her family is affluent and educated, in a territory where almost one-third of the population is out of work. She was born in Arab East Jerusalem and later moved to a quiet Palestinian suburb close to the mixed Jewish and Arab capital.

As a teenager, Muna had taken part in a few demonstrations against Israel, and in fact had been questioned by the Israeli authorities for causing a disturbance. Then while studying for a degree in psychology at Bir Zeit University, often seen as a hotbed of Palestinian resistance, Muna met Hassan al-Qadi, an acquaintance with whom she would remain in touch over the years. Al-Qadi was a member of the Fatah, the PLO faction of Palestinian leader Yasir Arafat, and police reports say that Muna joined, too. In 1999, she again came to the attention of police authorities—this time, for allegedly throwing a Molotov cocktail at Israeli soldiers.

Her parents strongly advised Muna against studying psychology (a "man's career"). They urged her to consider a business major, but she flatly refused. "It was no use arguing with her," says her mother, Samira. "She knew what she wanted, and she wouldn't stop until she'd got it."

After a brief job search, Muna began work as a reporter. Every day, she would rise at 10 A.M. to prepare sweet black coffee for herself and her mother. Sometimes, she would help with the household chores, leaving afterward for work in Ramallah, a 10-minute drive away. Much of her time was spent out of the office, covering countless funerals of Palestinians killed in conflicts with the Israeli Army, witnessing procession after procession of Palestinians carrying the mangled bodies of their dead through the streets. Her constant exposure to death and grieving took its toll, according to her family. She would watch the TV news every evening in silence. "But she took it all to heart. Seeing mothers crying all the time had a deep effect on her," Muna's mother says. Colleagues in the office building where Muna worked all say the same thing: She wasn't like the other girls. Quiet and moody, Muna rarely spoke to others; like Ofir, she seemed most comfortable in the company of a computer.

For the first couple of months of their virtual flirtation, "Sali" and Ofir chatted sporadically, using ICQ or e-mail. Their conversations—fixated on hobbies, family, and school—slowly built up a charge of sexual energy. Ofir's shyness disappeared in cyberspace, and though he was secretive about his forays on the Net and disliked family members looking over his shoulder, he even began boasting to friends about his new Web mate. To Sali, however, his messages were gallant, sentimental, expressive; he clearly harbored more than sexual desire for his new confidante. No one who knew Ofir could think him capable of snowing her with sweet words simply for a sexual conquest. No one who knew Muna, however, could think she was just as naive.

Muna never discussed Ofir with coworkers or family. She even avoided chatting with him at her office computer. For five shekels (just over a dollar) an hour, she instead would log on to one of 15 Philips 107E terminals at the al-Abed Internet Café.

Al-Abed holds a unique place in Ramallah's youth scene. For a while, the café was the only gathering place for adventurous, Net-curious Palestinians; it is usually full of excited teenagers eager to communicate with the outside world. Mohammad Nabhan, manager of al-Abed, says that Palestinians used to view the Internet as a carrier of undesirable information. But today, he believes, things are different: "Ramallah is so isolated from the rest of the world, and people here are realizing what an important information provider and communicator the Net can be."

Muna became a regular face at al-Abed. Unlike other Palestinian women, who would show up in small, protective groups, Muna always came alone. As she entered the café and made her way to her usual

spot at terminal No. 8, she would pass a window with a clear view of the Palestinian Authority offices, bombed several times in the past eight months. It was there that her relationship with Ofir began, and where it gathered steam.

Ofir's pride and joy was his mobile phone, a 3120 Nokia with text-messaging, interchangeable panels, and a host of accessories. Israel has one of the highest penetration rates of cellular phones in the world—exploding buses and suicide bombers make them less a status symbol than a vital way to maintain all-hours contact with loved ones. At the beginning of December, after two months of e-mailing and instant messaging, Ofir and Muna had exchanged cell phone numbers. She made sure never to call him at home, unless Ofir mentioned that his parents would be out.

She began sending him text messages during class, as many as five or six an hour. "It's from Sali," he would whisper to friends, swinging back in his chair during math class while reading the next missive. The message was always the same: She missed him and wanted to be with him. During the December vacation, they arranged to meet.

The date never happened: Ofir told Muna he was sick—which he was, according to friends and family. Most experienced Net chatters would end an online romance right there—the last-minute "chicken out" is a sure sign that someone isn't playing straight with his description, intention, or motivation. Muna lay low for a while, but when Ofir got back in touch with her later, she reinforced her desire to meet. They agreed at last to go through with it on January 17, a Wednesday.

While Ofir again shared his secret with his friends, Muna reached for the phone and dialed up her friend Hassan al-Qadi, the Fatah militant, a tall man with blue eyes and tanned skin.

No one knows for sure what they discussed, except these three things: that Muna was going to lure Ofir to Ramallah; that she wanted al-Qadi as an accomplice to impose whatever fate she had planned for him (reports about her scheme conflict dramatically); and that al-Qadi hesitated, claiming Ofir was too young. But Muna insisted her plan would work, and al-Qadi finally agreed.

Notoriety within the anti-Israel resistance is an almost impossible ambition for a woman. Despite Muna's alleged 1999 attack with a Molotov cocktail against Israeli police, she had no reputation within Fatah, but if she and al-Qadi succeeded in their plan, they could change this. His profile was not much higher than her own, but he was a man and had reportedly carried out a number of "actions" against Israelis.

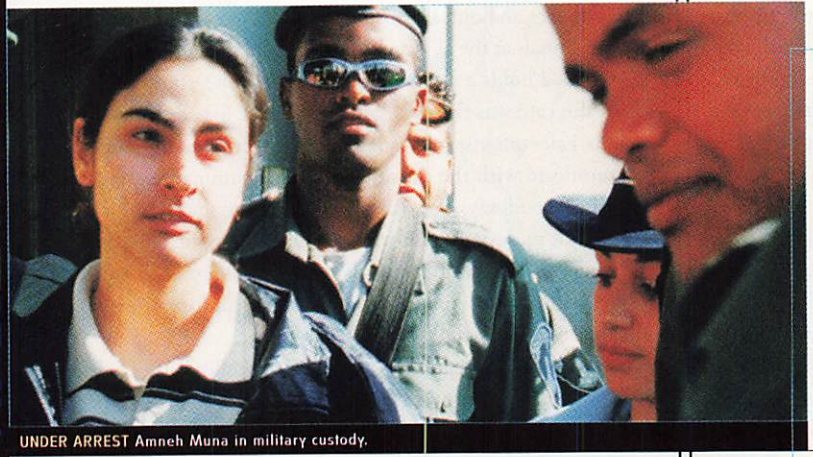
Muna's anger about the Israeli occupation was growing daily. Mona Mekhafeh, who worked at al-Abed Internet Café, clearly remembers Muna spending time at the site **Intifawda.com [www.intifawda.com]**. In particular, Muna gazed at a picture of Isam Judeh, a middle-aged Palestinian who has become something of a symbol for reportedly being tortured by Israelis, including some particularly brutal treatment with a red-hot iron. When she stared at this image, Muna's face went deathly pale, almost yellow. She looked furious. Another section of the site notes, "over 450 people, mainly children, have been murdered as result of Israeli attacks," and includes pictures of a bloodied Palestinian youth.

```
sali    what time will you leave ashkelon
ofir    7:30
sali    cool. will you come by bus or by taxi?
ofir    do you know how much a cab from tel
        aviv to jerusalem costs?
sali    about 200 sh. but you can find one with
        150 sh. do you have enough money?
ofir    no from ashkelon to jerusalem? do you
        know how much
sali    i don't know. it will not be more...than
        200 sh. do you need money?
ofir    i need but i cant ask that from you
sali    its ok. how much do you need?
ofir    i don't know if I have enough to come
        back to ashkelon
sali    i told you I will bring you back to tel
        aviv in my friends car. but she will be
        with us. is it ok coz I am afraid to
        drive alone at night...
ofir    when do you finish working
sali    i think I will take a day off so as
        to stay together
```

For days before their face-to-face, Muna would e-mail Ofir during the day while he was still at school. "I hope you are coming on Wednesday," she wrote. "Please don't say no...I need you to be with me...please." In the afternoon, they would go online—Ofir at home in his tiny bedroom, Muna in the café.

Muna also began barraging him with text messages during school time, and calling him on his mobile phone. She never called him from her own, a Talk Man model activated by purchasing call cards. She preferred public pay phones.

When Ofir forgot to call her at an arranged time, Muna displayed her wrath in no uncertain terms, if in



UNDER ARREST Amneh Muna in military custody.

She began sending Ofir text messages during class, as many as five or six an hour. 'It's from Sali,' he would whisper to friends, swinging back in his chair during math class while reading the next missive. The message was always the same: She missed him and wanted to be with him

GRAVE SITE "The precious and the loved Ofir Rahum...slain at the hand of despicable murderers."

staccato prose: "YOU DIDN'T CALL. I AM SAD."

Ofir apologized for his slip, promising to show up for their meeting. "I miss you," he wrote. By this time, his buddies knew all the details of the upcoming rendezvous with Sali and how she had arranged for them to go to a girlfriend's house in Jerusalem for sex. He was locked in.

Muna, meanwhile, seemed particularly tense and withdrawn. On January 15, she was seen standing on the gray stone steps outside al-Abed, arguing heatedly with Hassan al-Qadi. Sarah, a coworker, claims she barely raised her head in greeting as Sarah passed her in the corridor that morning. "She only spoke to me once that week," Sarah recalls. "She said if anyone came looking for her, she was down in the Internet café."

That day, "Sali" and Ofir exchanged these messages:

sali dear I have to go now. I will call you tomorrow at 15.00. I will be waiting for you on Wednesday. I will have a good dream about you

ofir Ok. Love you

sali love you too.....you don't know how much I am waiting for Wednesday

It's hard to know exactly what's going through a **16-year-old boy's head** at any time. It's even harder when that boy is Israeli and suddenly finds himself playing hooky from school, anticipating what is probably his first real sexual experience

On January 17, Ofir rose early, showered, and carefully spiked his hair back with gel. His mother asked him to buy a new battery for her watch on his way home from school, and Ofir agreed. Wednesday was a long school day, so he would not be expected home before dusk. "I hope we have fun together," he had tapped out to Muna the day before. "We will have fun for sure," she had reassured him.

At 7 a.m., his red backpack slung over a shoulder, Ofir said good-bye to his mother and left home. Instead of taking the bus to school, he headed for Jerusalem, about 70 miles away. It was the first time Ofir had ever traveled so far on his own. It was also the first time he had ditched school. "If I don't show up for class tomorrow, be happy for me," Ofir had told classmates the day before.

That morning, Muna got up and made coffee for her mother as usual. She even had time to hang out the washing on the back porch of the house before leaving by cab for a final meeting with al-Qadi.

Arriving in Jerusalem at about 9:30 A.M., Ofir called Muna from the bustling central bus station. Muna told him she was stuck in traffic and assured him she would be there shortly. Muna and al-Qadi were waiting at her final destination, pinpointing the actual spot at which Muna was to stop with Ofir.

Ofir called her twice more from the bus station, clearly agitated that his date had not shown. At around 10 A.M., Muna arrived in Jerusalem. Calling him from a pay phone near the bus station, Muna told him to wait for her by the information desk. From where she was standing, Muna was close enough to see him, flustered and excited, walking over to the new meeting point.

She would have known what he looked like. The night before, in their last electronic chat before they met, she wondered, "But tell me how do you look like?"

"I'm 174 cm, I'm white, black hair, blue-green eyes. You?"

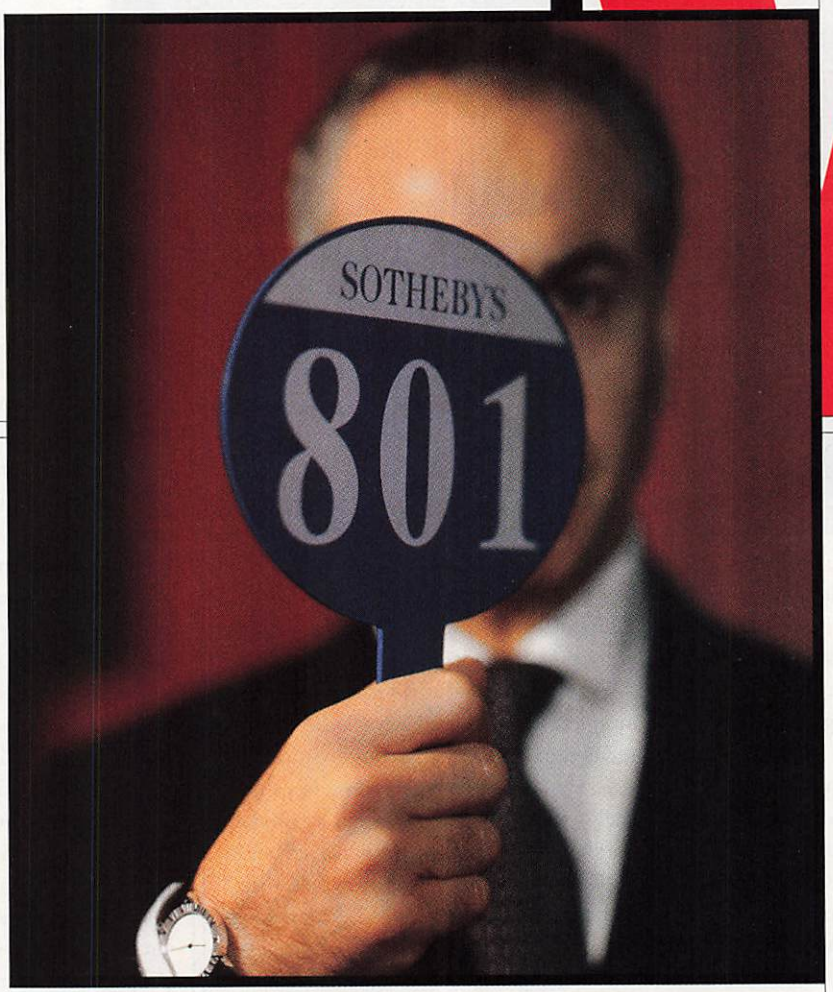
"I am 169 cm, black hair [in a] bob, hazel eyes."

Having determined that he was alone, Muna crossed over the busy main road and greeted Ofir. The moment of truth had arrived and for the first time in their four-month relationship, the two young people were face to face. Surrounded by the bustle of a packed bus station, they stood motionless for a split second, each looking the other one over.

It's hard to know exactly what's going through a 16-year-old boy's head at any time. It's even harder when that boy is Israeli and suddenly finds himself playing hooky from school, anticipating what is probably his first real sexual experience. But when he saw a plain, dark-haired woman wearing CONTINUED ON PAGE 120

Sotheby's

The afternoon of June 29, 2000, was quite an amazing time for the creator of *All in the Family*, the concept of e-commerce, and the most important document in U.S. history. Television impresario Norman Lear and a pal, Internet entrepreneur David Hayden, purchased one of the 25 surviving original copies of the Declaration of Independence, sold at auction for $8.1 million.



Even more thrilling was the fact that the buyers purchased the parchment trophy without the benefit of an actual salesroom; a living, breathing auctioneer; or even a ringing telephone. Instead, Lear, developer of the groundbreaking '70s sitcom that launched Archie Bunker and kin, was on his Vermont farm; Hayden, cofounder of the search engine Magellan, was on a plane. A Lear staffer placed the final offer on a computer in Manhattan.

The sale, conducted by **Sothebys.com**, the fledgling site for one of the world's largest fine-art auction houses, toppled all previous online records. Finally, potential buyers of high-end art had an alternative to sitting through snooty, old-fashioned auctions, as Cary Grant had in *North by Northwest*, with society types on velvet-upholstered chairs and a supercilious auctioneer taking bids on gold-framed paintings. It seemed only natural that veteran collectors and dealers would be delighted by the expanded market, and newcomers, drawn by the openness and ease of online bidding, would participate in droves.

It's a gripping picture, to be sure—the stuff that fuels those "the Web will change the world" dreams. Unfortunately, it's also not quite what it seems. The Declaration of Independence was on the virtual block because Sotheby's vice chairman,

STYLIST: LAURIE SCHECHTER; CLOTHING: POLO.COM; WATCH: TIFFANY.COM

Photographs by Chris Callis

YOU USED TO HAVE TO BE SOMEBODY TO BID AT THE WORLD'S PREMIER AUCTION HOUSE . . .

Sothebys.com

BY GWENDA BLAIR

David Redden, had suggested to the owner that an online auction would be an "exciting" way to offer it for sale. Lear and Hayden decided to bid not because of an image on a computer screen but after seeing the document at a presale exhibition.

But once you know something about the online auction world, the Declaration of Independence scene begins to make more sense. "All the really serious online sales are like that," explains Thea Westreich, a longtime professional art adviser based in New York. "They are driven by offline activity, by a sales force that works the street and finds the right sellers and the right buyers."

Despite the artifice involved in Sothebys.com's online stunt, a genuine shift is taking place. Although other auction sites, including eBay, have offered fine art online, the Internet debut of one of the most old-money institutions on the planet is a cultural landmark. For more than 250 years, Sotheby's has relied on a clubby, Anglophile atmosphere and a staff of former art-history majors to hawk masterpieces and prestigious hand-me-downs—from the contents of Napoleon's library to President Kennedy's rocking chair. Now this old-style holdout has entered a universe where prices are driven by impersonal markets rather than by breeding or connoisseurship.

But this new world has experienced more than a few bumps along the way: As with so many online ventures, the startup costs for an auction site are daunting. Christie's, a rival of Sotheby's, dropped its plans to offer live bidding online after investing more than $15 million in the effort, according to *The Wall Street Journal*. To date, Sothebys.com has burned through $80 million; if and when the venture will be profitable remains unclear. What *is* clear, though, is that by greatly expanding both the number of possible customers and the range of items considered truly valuable, online auctions have the potential to change the world of fine art in ways Sotheby's never expected.

At Sotheby's live auctions, where hundreds of items are offered for sale in a single day, bidders signal their offers with slight nods, half smiles, and other secretive, almost imperceptible gestures—even the experts have trouble following the action. Sothebys.com has an entirely different MO: It posts new items continually; bidders have up to 21 days to submit an offer in some cases; and databases tell anyone who asks what has been bid so far in the sale, and when. Auctiongoers at the Declaration sale could click Bidding History and learn that there were only two bidders, that the action began with a $4 million offer at 9 A.M., that most increments were $100,000, and that the virtual gavel went down on a final offer 29 bids later.

Art lovers have flocked to fine-art sites. In a single month, Sotheby's auction rooms

. . . BUT ONLINE, THEY LET JUST ANYBODY IN ON THE ACTION. IS CIVILIZATION GOING, GOING, GONE?

might attract a few thousand people in person and via phone bids; in a single day, Sothebys.com will have drawn about 300,000 page views. In the year 2000, the site had a total of 3 million unique visitors and $60 million in sales. For William Bartman, executive director of New York's Art Resources Transfer and one of the more than 5,000 dealers who provide inventory on Sothebys.com, the site has meant sales of 170 works at an average price of $750. "There probably isn't a state we haven't sold to," he says. Better yet, many of the sales were to people who had never bought art before. Bartman continues: "There's a kind of anonymity people like. They're not as intimidated as they might be in an auction room or a gallery."

For David Sestak, manager of a rock band, online auctions are a more efficient way to add to a collection of art photographs that includes prints by Diane Arbus and Robert Frank. "I was tired of going to auction houses and sitting through a whole day," says Sestak, who lives and works in eastern Pennsylvania. "I had started bidding by phone, but online auctions are even better—I can monitor what's happening and bid on everything I want."

So far, though, most visitors seem to have kept close tabs on their wallets. Sothebys.com's average sale price is about $1,500, roughly one-tenth the live-auction per-sale average of $14,000. Such disappointing revenues have taken a toll: In 2000, Sothebys.com lost $48 million (according to an article in *The New York Times*; Sotheby's, a private company, refuses to confirm the figure), despite selling more than 60,000 lots. In part, this reflects a general downturn in the auction market, which for the year 2000 dropped 17 percent in North America and 13 percent in Europe. Other online auction operations also fared poorly; eBay revamped its original high-end online site, Great Collections, and **Artnet.com**, where David Sestak made most of his online purchases, pulled the plug on all Net auction activity.

In addition, a U.S. Justice Department probe into charges that Sotheby's and Christie's illegally conspired to set commission rates may be scaring off both sellers and buyers. Sotheby's former chief executive and president has pleaded guilty to collusion charges; the former chairman was indicted in May, along with his counterpart at Christie's; and each of the two houses has been ordered to refund $256 million to customers.

Perhaps more ominous, the shortfall may stem from characteristics inherent to the Internet. The anonymity of online auctions, for example, allows William Bartman's new clients to feel comfortable about buying art there but also provides a shield for misrepresentation and shoddy wares.

A collector who attended Sotheby's Arts of the Renaissance auction and bought a 14th-century painting of the Annunciation for a price in the mid five figures says she wouldn't think of buying such a piece online: "My boyfriend and I look at art online, but I don't really believe it. I don't know if the works on the screen are real or not. We look at auction catalogs and then go to the preview exhibition to see if the art is what we thought it was."

Whether the goods are filing cabinets or an original Jasper Johns, the Net treats items as commodities. This makes sense for a filing cabinet, where most questions (How many drawers? How wide?) are finite and easily answered. With art, there's a deeper level of knowledge and emotion involved. People thinking about acquiring a work of art or an antique want to have their own experience of the object itself. To feel the passion required to fork over real money, would-be buyers need more than a computer image.

"In person, everything always looks different than it does in the picture," says Manhattan lawyer Steven Ross. "Sometimes it's for the better and sometimes it's for the worse, but I don't want to take a chance." Online he has never spent more than $1,000, but at Sotheby's Important Americana auction, Ross was ready to plunk down $30,000—more than he's ever paid for anything in his life—for a Chippendale grandfather clock. He had fallen in love with it when he visited the presale exhibition and was heartbroken when it went for $75,000. "There has to be an emotional connection for me," he says. "The object has to speak to me, and that just can't happen online."

For many potential buyers, the room has to speak as well. At another Sotheby's auction, a Connecticut businessman who would identify himself only as Bill demonstrated an interest in a Madonna-and-child painting recently attributed to Botticelli. The painting, which bore an estimate of $800,000, sold to another bidder for $940,750—quite a bargain, given that the work was by one of the most highly esteemed artists of the Renaissance. Nonetheless, Bill stopped bidding early on and says he would not have bid at all if the work had been offered for auction online. "I dropped out because there wasn't a lot of interest in the room," he recalls. "I think most people thought there was

SOME LIKE IT NOT
The Monroe auction at eBay Premier left buyers a bit cold.

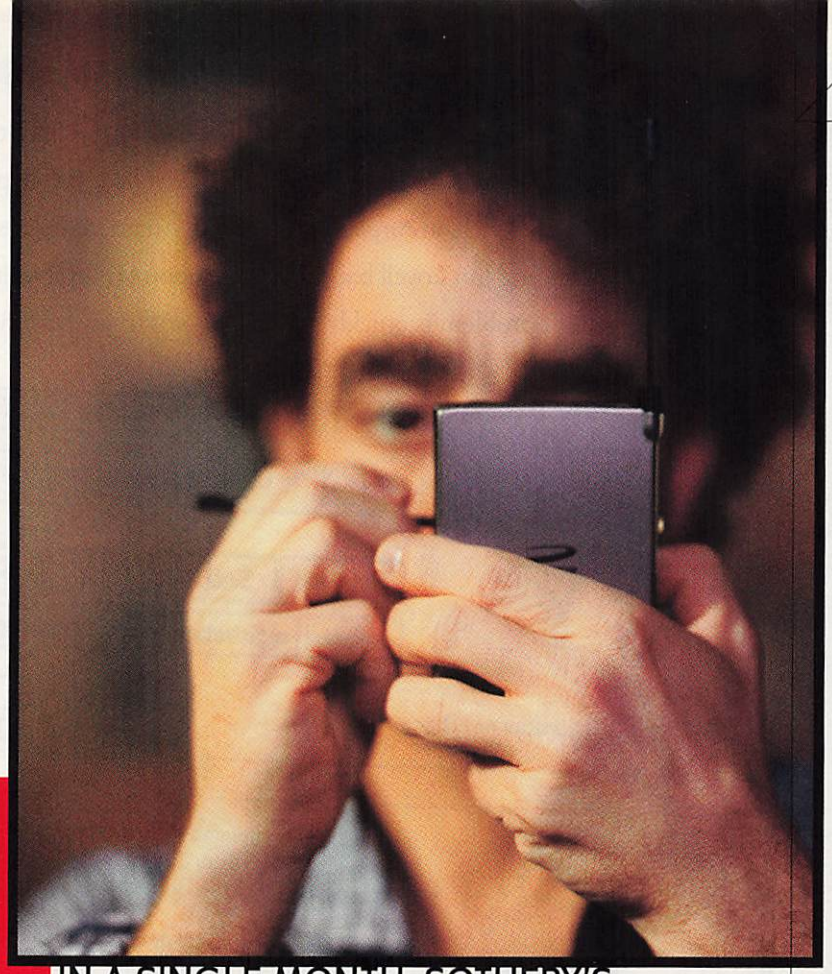
MONROE: COURTESY BUTTERFIELDS AUCTIONEERS

something wrong with the painting. There would be no way to tell that online."

London dealer Richard Philp, whose family has been in the antiquities trade for four generations, says online bidding is "okay for run-of-the-mill works" but not for more important objects. Although he looks at high-end works online, he says he would not bid without examining them with a magnifying glass. "For those things, live auctions are what you need," he argues. "Serious collectors and dealers want to handle the pieces and see who is there. They need to eye the competition, pick up on the gossip, and hear whether someone else has found out something more about a painting or a sculpture."

In the flurry of excitement over the price paid for the Declaration of Independence, it was easy to overlook that this particular object is not actually a work of art—it is a collectible. As such, it is valuable not for how it looks but for how rare it is. Collectibles at Sothebys.com include everything from a huge leprechaun medallion salvaged from the floor of the Boston Celtics' home court, which sold for $331,000 (the second highest amount for an online auction at Sothebys.com), to English porcelain and Patek Philippe watches. Because past sales prices are readily available, making it relatively easy to track their resale value in the future, collectibles are what online bidders seem to feel safest buying. They're made to order for a medium that reduces everything to an image on a screen; it makes sense that Sotheby's is transferring auction sales of all collectibles and coins to its online venue, although the auction house wants to leave open the option of resuming live auctions at some point.

But regardless of whether Sothebys.com is selling a vintage ukulele or a cubist painting, it still has not solved what may be its biggest problem: its prices. Standard auction practice dictates that no sale occurs unless bidding reaches the "reserve"—the sum named by the dealer (but kept confidential) as the minimal price. In addition, some auctioneers create excitement (and higher prices) with "chandelier bidding"—announcing fake offers along with real ones. Because the online auctiongoer lacks the immediacy of being in a room full of competitors, many of the dealers posting goods on Sothebys.com compensate for the lesser prices they'll receive by setting such high starting bids that many items do not receive a single offer.



IN A SINGLE MONTH, SOTHEBY'S AUCTION ROOMS MIGHT ATTRACT A FEW THOUSAND PEOPLE IN PERSON AND VIA PHONE BIDS; IN A SINGLE DAY, SOTHEBYS.COM WILL HAVE DRAWN ABOUT 300,000 PAGE VIEWS

"People go to auctions to pick up a bargain, not to pay what they would at retail," notes Judith Gerson, a collector of Asian porcelains who lives in Cleveland. "If you're going to pay a high price, why do it online, where you can't even pick up the merchandise?" Why, indeed—unless there's an online experience that seems worth it. Recently eBay came up with a three-ring circus–style solution to this problem. Its new upscale site, **eBay Premier [ebaypremier.com]**, offers the option of fixed-price sales for buyers willing to purchase fine art online but not to wait until an auction is over to find out if their bid has won. Standard online auctions of fine art and antiques are also available at eBay Premier, and, through Webcasting—which allows visitors to see bids scrolling by in real time—buyers can also choose online bidding at live auctions. While you *can* view what's going on, you hardly "experience" it while staring at your monitor—one reason why online auctions aren't turning into the next spectator sport.

Still, if anyone could generate excitement for online auctions, it would seem to be Marilyn. At an eBay Premier auction of Marilyn Monroe memorabilia in March, bids totaling $840,000 failed to meet the (undisclosed) minimum set for the top items: a set of nude Monroe photographs (including the famous shots from *Playboy* magazine's debut issue), as well as the intellectual property rights to reproduce the images. Geoff Iddison, the CONTINUED ON PAGE 121

PAJAMAS: JOCKEY.COM

I AM A B-A-A-AD eBAYER

For eBay fanatics, "positive feedback" is the crack that fuels their all-night spending sprees. Most of the posts by eBay customers are filled with hyperbolic praise, as if the successful exchange of a Jefferson Airplane poster for 18 American dollars were an accomplishment on a par with bringing Jim Lovell back from the moon's orbit. Negative feedback is rare, and when it occurs, the problem is quickly addressed. Not in my case, however. X BY KEVIN GUILFOILE

Buyer Complaint: *Happy Days* "Fonz on Bike" lunch box filled with bees. I can hear them buzzing. Animal Control can't come until Thursday. I'm allergic, and they sound agitated.

Seller Response: *Happy Days* lost its edge after Arnold left, don't you think?

Buyer Complaint: Seller asked for shipping costs but delivered early-model "Ace Fighter Pilot" G.I. Joe in person. Drew weapon and fired wildly at floor and ceiling. Held my youngest child hostage for 36 hours. Shot negotiator in knee when he attempted to bring McDonald's.

Seller Response: Negotiator was supposed to arrive unarmed, but had obvious bulge around ankle. Turned out to be soft cast, but could have been holster. Ignore.

Buyer Complaint: Instead of "Dogs Playing Pinochle" poster, received collage of over 100 pictures of me, taken with a telephoto lens and without my knowledge. In each picture there's a red "X" over my mouth and my eyes have been cut out with scissors.

Seller Response: Oops. Honest mistake. Will pay return postage. Dog poster is on its way.

Buyer Complaint: "Mint" condition *Meet the Beatles* has visible scratch on one side. When I left neg feedback, seller planted "evidence" framing me for my husband's unsolved murder. Trial begins in three weeks.

Seller Response: Money order was three dollars short of bid. Plus, you can't "frame" someone who's obviously guilty.

Praise: Super AAAAAAAAAAAA++++++++++++ seller!!!!! Set of Beanies arrived with tags and in plastic as promised! Seller later followed me to hospital, where he switched my charts with another patient, resulting in unnecessary gallbladder operation instead of routine corn removal. Lawyer says malpractice suit worth millions!!

Seller Response: Excellent buyer. Check arrived in timely fashion. Good communication. You might also want a radiology consult.

Kevin Guilfoile is a contributing editor of Modern Humorist [modernhumorist.com] and the coauthor of *My First Presidentiary: A Scrapbook by George W. Bush.*

Illustrations by Josh Neufeld

ADVERTISEMENT

Yahoo! Internet Life Online Film Festival would like to congratulate the following filmmakers who were selected from twenty-nine short-film finalists screened exclusively online, **February 16 - March 15, 2001.** The distinguished Festival Jury, made up of elite members of the film industry, honored these filmmakers as true visionaries.

Filmmaker of the Future —
Brendan Gallagher, director of "Little G."
(Out To Play Entertainment Inc.)

Best Short Live Action —
"Silent Story" directed by Eduardo Cisneros
(Drama 3/4 Production)

Best Short Animation —
"Onion John" directed by Charles Alleneck
(Cal Arts/Film Roman/Level13.Net)

Best Short Documentary —
"Mighty Mutts" directed by Anne Paas (NYU)

The following films also received recognition in the Online Popular Vote competition where film lovers voted for their top pick.

Live Action —
"Allerd Fishbein's In Love" directed by Danny Greenfield (Atom Films, Apollo Cinema)
"BigLove" directed by Leif Tilden (The Orphanage and Anonymous)
"Roadside Assistance" directed by Jennifer Derwingson (University Of Southern California)
"Moment Of Silence" directed by Steven L. Austin (Galt's Gulch Productions)
"Shy Guy" directed by Fabien Michel (Bande A Part)
"Holiday On The Moon" directed by Sam Bozzo (www.Sambozzo.Com)

Animation —
"I Want a Fat Babe" directed by Regurge (Estudio / Shockwave.Com)
"Onion John" directed by Charles Alleneck (Cal Arts / Film Roman/Level13.Net)
"Titanic: A True Story" directed by Julien Reininger (Guido Films)
"Little G." directed by Brendan Gallagher (Out To Play Entertainment Inc.)
"Dream Detective" directed by Jordan Reichek, created by Robt. Williams (piratenet)
"Happy Tree Friends" directed by Rhode Montijo and Kenn Navarro (Mondo Media)

Documentary —
"Skid Row 2000" directed by Pascal Franchot (Spyworm Inc.)
"Diary Of An Alien" directed by Ellen Raine-Scott (Lightroom/www.Atom-Bomb.Com)
"Mighty Mutts" directed by Anne Paas (NYU)

PRIZES
The top film in each short category voted upon by the jury received packages courtesy of Sonic Foundry (Vegas Video 2.0, ACID Pro and Loops for ACID title) and Discreet (**3ds max™** and **combustion™**), premiere leaders in the film industry. The "Filmmaker of the Future" was awarded a $5,000 cash prize.

www.yilfilmfestival.com

SONIC FOUNDRY®

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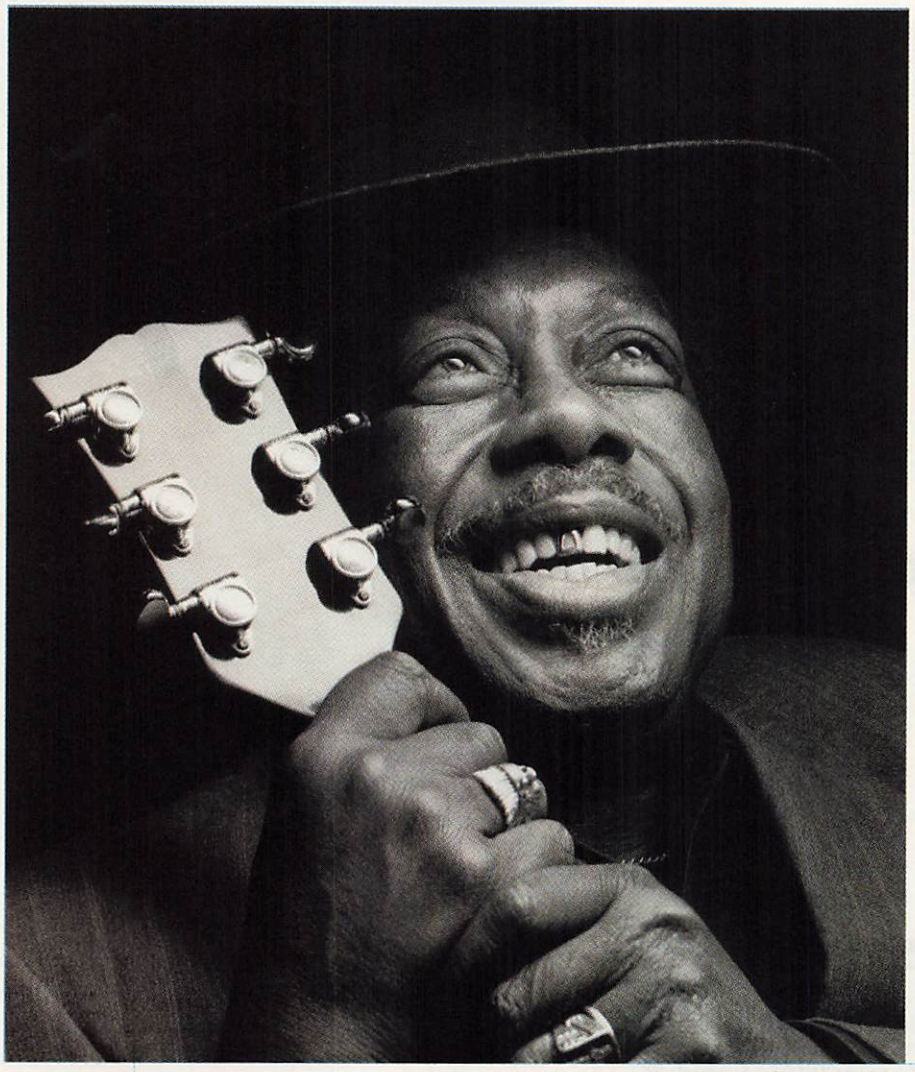
web guide

WHERE TO, HOW TO, BEST OF: OUR MONTHLY GUIDE TO LIFE ON THE WEB EDITED BY CREE McCREE



MARC NORBERG

TANGLED UP IN BLUES

The blues has always lived on the road, traveling up Highway 61 along the Mississippi to Chicago, where pioneers like Howlin' Wolf, Muddy Waters, and Jimmy Rogers (above) electrified the sound that gave birth to rock 'n' roll. These days, the blues journey continues on the info interstate, where you'll find plenty of maps to transport you to the music and the artists who make it. Among the stops along the way are sites that celebrate past masters, let you listen to classic and current bluescasts, and even point you to Delta juke joints where flesh-and-blood players peel the linoleum off the floor. We've got the keys to the highway on page 111.

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web guide

new, notable & fun

WHAT'S HOT—AND COOL—ON THE WEB THIS MONTH

BY MEAGHAN O'NEILL

RELAUNCH

Yahoo! Internet Life Parting ways with former host ZDNet, our very own Web site has relaunched with a snazzy new design. You'll still find your favorite features, such as incredibly useful sites, the surf guru, freebies, and Net radio. Stop by the brand-new message center, Express Yourself, where you can tell us what you think. **[yil.com]**

EW.com The online counterpart of *Entertainment Weekly* has been reorganized into topic-specific sections that resemble those found in the print magazine. So if you simply must know everything about that upcoming Julia Roberts movie, you'll find it all in one spot. Search also by category for 11 years' worth of articles. **[ew.com]**

Quicken.com Whether you're looking for a home loan or want to diversify your portfolio, the new features here will help you control your financial life. Daily e-mail updates track your investments, and wireless services let you access information when you're on the go. **[quicken.com]**

SERVICES

LegalZoom.com This document-preparation service, founded in part by Robert Shapiro of *People v. O.J. Simpson* fame, helps you process and file papers for divorces, wills, copyrights, and other legal procedures – at fees substantially below standard attorney costs. **[legalzoom.com]**

ForeignBorn.com As its name suggests, this site provides information for non-U.S. citizens who are moving to this country, studying here, or applying for visas. The guides address topics such as how to obtain a driver's license and how to purchase health insurance. **[foreignborn.com]**

PORTAL PATROL

News and entertainment top the list of on-demand streaming video and audio content available at the enhanced Yahoo! Broadcast [broadcast.yahoo.com]. With content compiled from hundreds of sources, such as ABCNews.com, the portal hopes to attract advertisers as well as consumers. Meanwhile, Yahoo! Travel [travel.yahoo.com] has entered the wireless age. Access itineraries, flight departure times, and personalized information via cell phone or PDA.

The AOL Time Warner sites Time, People, Money, and Warner Bros. now have Netscape-branded toolbars where visitors access AOL [aol.com] instant messenger, e-mail, calendar, and search engine features.

All you need is a headset and a microphone to host your own show at Lycos Talk Radio [talkradio.lycos.com]. Join the network for free to create your own live program, or just tune in to listen.

SPOTLIGHT

PATRICK DEMARCHELIER

SCENES THROUGH A LENS

Images from the portfolio of photographer Patrick Demarchelier hang on the walls of his online gallery, **Demarchelier.net**, where Masai warriors and classical ballerinas are captured with equal eloquence. If his fashion layouts intrigue you, make your next link the ultramodern **Zoozoom.com**; the site's high-concept studio shoots may be bandwidth hogs, but the models are stylish and sleek. Prefer natural beauty? Browse Zoozoom's fine-art gallery or check out **ToddSkinner.com**, which chronicles the travels of one of today's most accomplished rock climbers. The photos capture his impressive ascents around the world, from the pristine waters of Ha Long Bay, Vietnam, to the steamy jungle of Amazonia. Rivaled only by the astounding athleticism of the climbers, the splendor of these shots may inspire you to shut down your computer and travel the world instead of the World Wide Web.

COMMUNITY

PoliticalCircus.com With daily headlines and weekly reports, this site aims to be the ultimate political resource for Asian Pacific Americans. Editors from across the U.S. monitor local, state, and national news in order to unify the community, while they avoid drawing partisan lines. **[politicalcircus.com]**

ChristianityToday.com The online arm of the print magazine cofounded by Billy Graham in 1956, this site includes 9,700 archived articles, music and parenting channels, and chatrooms. Travelers will find resources for planning group tours. **[christianitytoday.com]**

ENTERTAINMENT

FilmWise Bored with the same old movie trivia? Visual quizzes here test your knowledge of the silver screen. Match dead bodies with their filmic sources in But of Corpse! Or try your luck at Invisibles, where the actors have been digitally removed from still screen shots, leaving just their clothes. **[filmwise.com]**

Online Classics If you're a fan of the performing arts but can't make it to the theater as often as you'd like, get your Tchaikovsky fix here. Download streaming video of opera, dance, and orchestral events, and catch live broadcasts from around the world. **[www.onlineclassics.com]**

SPORTS

SportsJones Don't expect to find recaps of last night's games at this site, dubbed the "thinking fan's sports site" by ESPN. Instead, the articles and intelligent commentary cover the culture, commerce, and politics of mainstream sports. **[sportsjones.com]**

Sports.com You know where to go for baseball stats, but what about cricket, rugby, and sailing? For games making headlines outside the U.S., bookmark this URL. One tip: The lingo here is strictly European, so don't look for Super Bowl predictions in the football section. **[sports.com]**

DESIGN

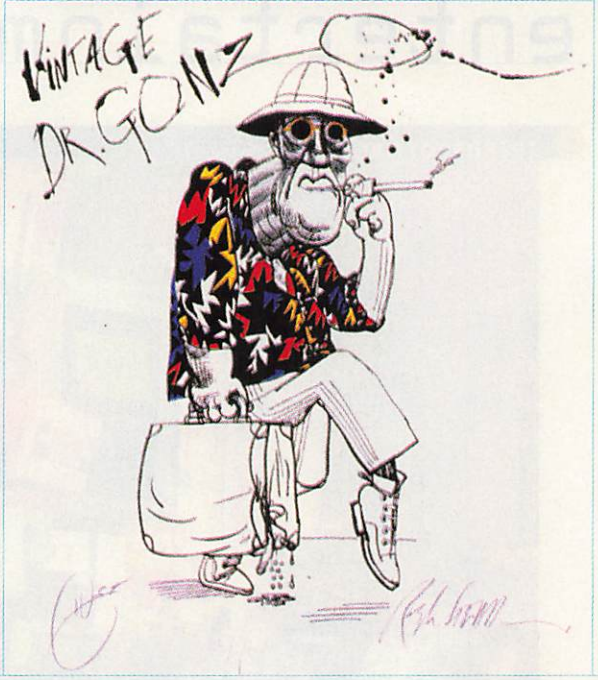
Follow the Sun From 1930 to 1950 the Australian National Travel Association commissioned lithographs to put the country on the "travel map and keep it there." The bright, nostalgic posters reproduced here represent the towns, wildlife, and sports that originally attracted tourists to the land Down Under. **[www.nla.gov.au/exhibitions/sun]**

Bart Prince: Architect This designer creates astonishing organic houses such as the Henry Whiting residence, which undulates with the hills of Idaho where it is situated. Don't pass over the Models and Drawings page, where you'll find plans for palaces that look like strange flowers on a faraway planet – or the spaceships to take you there. **[bartprince.com]**

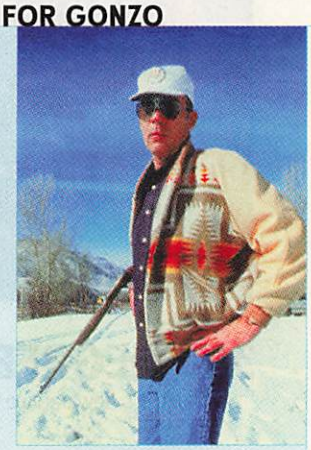
WOMAN (SHERYL LEE): FOTO FANTASIES; ILLUSTRATION: ©RALPH STEADMAN; THOMPSON: JEFFREY AARONSON/TIMEPIX

MISSING LINK?

SITES WE SUGGEST YOU SAMPLE TOGETHER



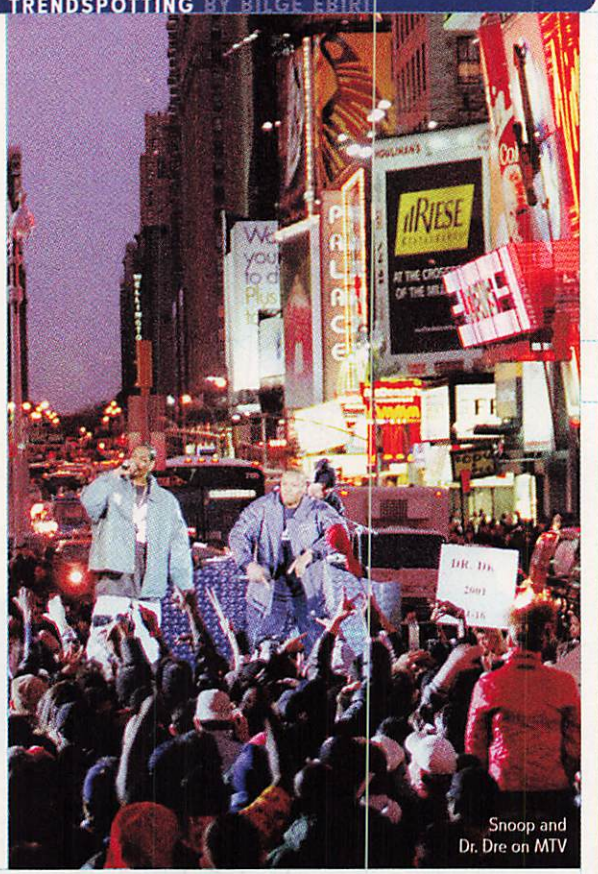
NET TIME FOR GONZO



FACE-OFF: Ralph Steadman's portrait of Hunter S. Thompson (top), and a recent photo.

It may come as no surprise that several fans have built shrines to Dr. Hunter S. Thompson, who unleashed gonzo journalism upon the world. But who would have guessed that the outlaw scribe would make his Internet debut working for the family-friendly Mouse? Proving that truth is stranger than fiction, Thompson's opinionated column, "Hey Rube," appears weekly on the Disney-owned ESPN.com, at **ESPN.com: Page 2 [espn.go.com/page2]**. Although we doubt (alas) that you'll ever see him spouting off behind the desk on ESPN's Sports Center, there is still a way to invite the football-loving libertarian into your living room. Longtime collaborator Ralph Steadman has made several portraits of his partner in crime—er, reportage. Silk screens are available at **www.ralphsteadman.com**, priced from $250 to $4,000. Don't have the loot? You can still read Steadman's bio, where he offers his own version of the origins of *gonzo*: "Giuseppe uttered the strange, oathlike words *gonzo puro* at my birth. Three hours later the Spanish Civil War broke out."

TRENDSPOTTING BY BILGE EBIRI



Snoop and Dr. Dre on MTV

360 DEGREES OF MUSIC

Will MTV's new service transform the post-Napster Web?

Another month, another company positioning itself as Napster's heir. Of course, if the company is MTV, things get a bit more interesting. Scheduled to be in full operation by July, the project known as MTV360 is expected to integrate the cable channels MTV and MTV2 with the network's Web site, and add instant-messaging capabilities to **MTV.com.**

The new venture represents more than a just a post-Napster realignment. It's also an important recognition on MTV's part that the Net and television need not be competitors, and can in fact be close collaborators.

Reemphasizing music as MTV's primary product, the new service is designed to synchronize programming across all the network's platforms. While an act appears on MTV's *Total Request Live*, for example, MTV2 will be playing the band's videos continuously, and both channels will direct viewers to MTV.com, where they'll be able to chat and download tracks—some for free as music-company promotions, others for a fee. At press time, it was still up in the air whether the downloads would be subscription-based or pay-per-download. In other words, as with so many promises made before on the Web, we're watching and waiting. Still, with its brand name and its popularity with the coveted youth market, MTV may well be the company to pull it off. And if not? Well, there's always AOL Time Warner, which recently announced plans to unveil its own cable music channel in early 2002. Stay tuned.

SPORTS

TENNIS

WHERE TO START

TennisOnline Your pals may be glued to the latest WWF smackdown, but you prefer the more refined art of tennis, so you're sure to appreciate this thorough site. It'll keep you on top of all the major tournaments, and its Training and Fitness Center has everything you'll need to improve your own game – and all with nary a picture of Anna Kournikova. **[tennisonline.com]**

TOP OF THE HEAP

The All England Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club It might sound like an organization for easygoing retirees, but it's the home of Wimbledon. Read the illustrious history of the Championships, and stay abreast of this year's matches (June 25–July 8). Don't miss the nifty downloadable wallpaper. **[www.wimbledon.org]**

EYE ON THE BALL

CBS SportsLine.com: Tennis A number of useful features make this site a winner, including weekly quotes from players, smart columns about conditioning and injury prevention, and e-mail questions answered by Women's Tennis Association veteran Kristina Brandi. Think you know the game? The Trivia Challenge might call your bluff. **[sportsline.com/tennis]**

CHOOSE YOUR WEAPON

Racquet Research When you step onto the court, you should be carrying the right equipment. If you don't know torque from torsion, the Complete Idiot's Guide to Choosing a Tennis Racquet is a good primer. To help you make a wise choice, the site evaluated 187 models last year. **[racquetresearch.com]** KEVIN DELANEY

Venus Williams

MTV: FRANK MICELOTTA/IMAGE DIRECT; WILLIAMS: DAVID GRAY/TIMEPIX

MUSIC

THE BLUES

Janis Joplin

BURNIN' BIOS

The Blue Flame Cafe Did you know that Muddy Waters recorded "Mean Red Spider" in 1946 under the pseudonym James "Sweet Lucy" Carter? Get the lowdown on dozens of major artists, from Robert Johnson to Robert Cray, and sample clips of their music. Catch Big Mama Thornton's "Ball 'n' Chain," then click over to the version immortalized by Janis Joplin. **[blueflamecafe.com]**

COLLECTIVE SOUL

The Blue Highway Read lovingly written tributes to first-generation pioneers and tune in to a sizzlin' array of RealAudio bluescasts. Hundreds of artist links demonstrate that just about anyone can get the blues – including Sweden's Ouagadougou Boogie Oogie Band. **[thebluehighway.com]**

LIVE ACTION

Junior's Juke Joint If you're not content just to cruise the Net for your dose of the blues, head to Junior's. Take the cybertour of honest-to-goodness Delta "jukes," then hop in your car and drive on down to Roque's Blues Hall in Natchitoches, Louisiana, or Gully's Alley Inn in Moorhead, Mississippi. Maps included. **[deltablues.net]**

FLAME KEEPERS

Music Maker Relief Foundation Love the blues? Support the folks who make it. This nonprofit assists aging musicians with grants for food, medical needs, and housing, as well as tour support and instrument acquisition. The site introduces you to real-deal artists like Captain Luke and Cootie Stark, and lets you bid on signed instruments donated by such luminaries as Pete Townshend. **[musicmaker.org]** PAMELA DES BARRES

MOVIES

GOING APE

THE ORIGINAL

Ape Fest: The Ultimate in Planet of the Apes It's been recast as a TV drama series, a cartoon, and a line of action figures, but nothing beats the original five *Planet of the Apes* movies. Devotees will appreciate Ape Fest's obscure facts (Charlton Heston's character, Taylor, originally was named Thomas), sound files of dialogue ("Get your stinkin' paws off me!"), and history quiz (How did the apes become slaves?). **[geocities.com/hollywood/1170]**

THE REMAKE

Rule the Planet; Tim Burton's Planet of the Apes Like many sci-fi classics, *Planet of the Apes* is getting a big-budget reworking. The official Rule the Planet site has the trailer, some flashy graphics, and a short interview with director Tim Burton. Those seeking more depth should crash their spaceships on the fan site, which boasts rumors and stills from the set. **[planetoftheapes.com]; [planetoapes.terrashare.com]**

THE DIRECTOR

That Website About Tim Burton Even with Marky Mark in it, the remake may have a hard time living up to its inspiration. But maybe it won't be that hard with Tim Burton at the helm. This site explores not only Burton's cinematic oeuvre but also his artwork, books, and TV outings. In a nod to his latest project, the online video store stocks the original five-film *POTA* collection along with Burton's own movies. The site was among the first to offer a peek at the Japanese version of the new *POTA* poster. **[efanguide.com/~timburton]** PAUL SEMEL

GUEST GUIDE

SITCOM ALUMNUS GARY COLEMAN

Late in 1999, when actor Gary Coleman was beset by financial problems, **UnderGroundOnline [ugo.com]** held an online auction to benefit the onetime *Diff'rent Strokes* star—and ended up raising $10,000. Coleman now authors a weekly advice column for UGO, called "Coleman Confidential." Here, he reveals his favorite sites:

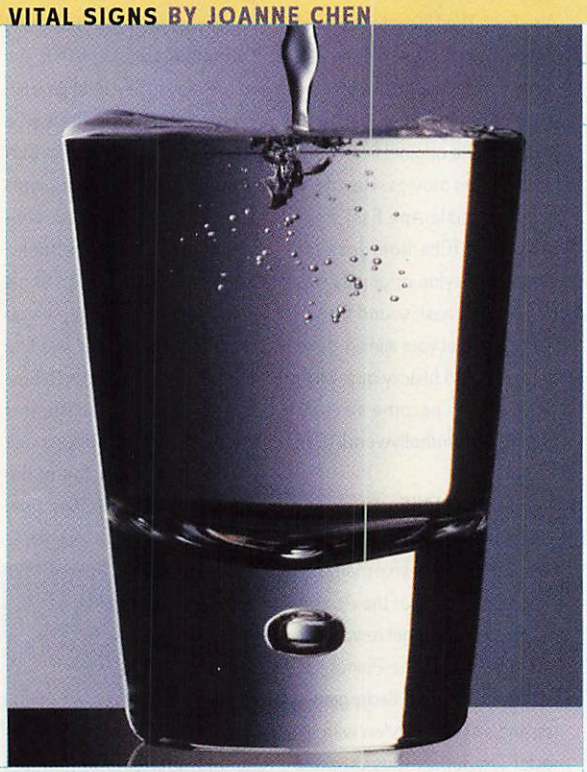
GODDESSES I've learned more about Greek mythology from the Net than I ever learned in school. I like studying the goddesses because I'm into astronomy and astrology—and besides, they're really good-looking! **[www.goddesses.com]**

POETRY.COM A pretty cool site if you like poetry. I write poetry myself occasionally, but I haven't posted anything yet. **[poetry.com]**

JET PROPULSION LABORATORY I like to read about NASA missions and research, and look at any imagery they have from the Hubble. I'm most interested in the Mars missions—wondering when man will actually put his foot on the damn thing! **[jpl.nasa.gov]** KEVIN DELANEY

JOPLIN: BARON WOLMAN/RETNA; COLEMAN: EVERETT COLLECTION, INC.; APE: © 2001, TWENTIETH CENTURY FOX

VITAL SIGNS BY JOANNE CHEN



Rx FOR HEALTHY TRAVEL

Put the Web on your packing list – and shop smart

Elite travelers haven't cornered the market on in-flight luxuries. Special pills, pillows, and other paraphernalia promise to transform any cramped coach seat into a cushy business-class berth. But the gadgets hawked on travel and health sites often come with price tags that exceed their worth.

"There are a lot of products out there with no scientific data" to support their manufacturers' claims, says David O. Freedman, M.D., director of the **UAB Travelers' Health Clinic [start.tripprep.com/uabtraveldoc]** at the University of Alabama in Birmingham, who is leery of such New Age gimcracks as motion-sickness bracelets and antiradiation pendants. And the best stuff is often the cheapest. Freedman, who spends much of his time on planes, drinks lots of water, which he finds more effective than an air diffuser or an immune-system booster at preventing jet lag. To sleep properly, he packs an inflatable neck pillow. Also good bets: ginger pills or meclizine (Bonine) for motion sickness, and ear plugs to relieve pressure.

Shop wisely, and you can arrive at your destination feeling first-rate—with enough cash for souvenirs. Freedman recommends the well-stocked virtual shelves at **Chinook Medical Gear Inc. [chinookmed.com]** and **Travel Medicine [travmed.com]**.

LIFE SPANS

LONGEVITY

START HERE

World Health Network Ever since Juan Ponce de León set out in search of the legendary Fountain of Youth, there have been schemes to ward off the inevitable. Get reliable information from the American Academy of Anti-Aging Medicine, a nonprofit consortium of health care professionals. Access news about the latest studies, or search for antiaging clinics and physicians in your area. A detailed longevity test can help you determine your odds of living a long life. **[worldhealth.net]**

SLOW DOWN

Life Extension Foundation We all know that eating less promotes longevity, but did you know that lipoic acid, found in blueberries, can retard the aging of the brain? The LEF supports a wide range of clinical research, including cryopreservation of cells, tissues, and organs for transplants. **[lef.org]**

STOP TIME

CBS HealthWatch by Medscape Human growth hormone has been approved by the FDA for children and adults deficient in the hormone. But is it also a safe and effective way to turn back the clock? Search on *antiaging* here to retrieve "Human Growth Hormone: Hokum or Fountain of Youth?" **[cbsmedscape.com]** PAMELA DES BARRES

MENTAL HEALTH

SOUND COUNSEL

CRISIS INTERVENTION

Befrienders International The World Health Organization estimates that more than 1 million people committed suicide in 2000. Many of those individuals might still be alive if they'd had someone to talk to. Befrienders International provides a network of trained volunteers. E-mail queries are answered within 24 hours; and if that's not fast enough, there's a worldwide directory of telephone hot lines. **[befriendersinternational.org]**

EXPERT ADVICE

Psych Central Whether you're feeling suicidal or just a little anxious, Dr. John Grohol's mental health page is a good place to start researching your condition. Covering everything from eating disorders to posttraumatic stress, it features a searchable library of articles, and weekly chat sessions with the doctor himself. **[psychcentral.com]**

SELF-HEALING

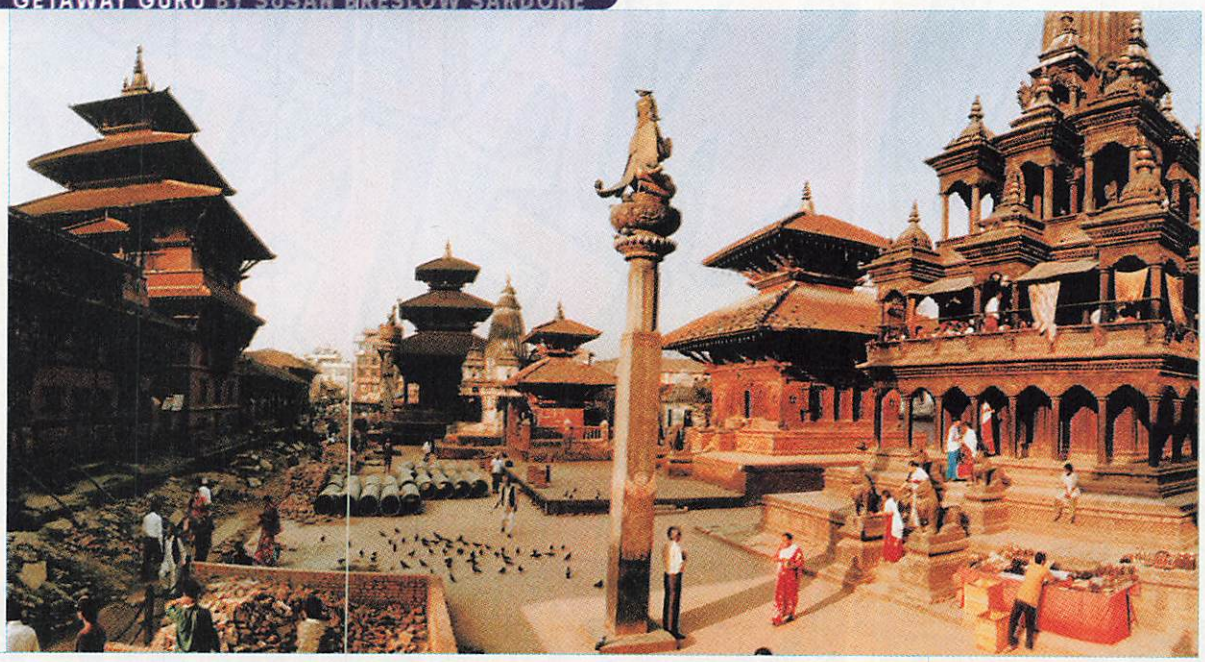
Have a Heart's Depression Resource Stephen L. Bernhardt, who has experienced severe depression, offers practical advice on fighting back. The site is loaded with mood-enhancing exercises and ways to stop negative thinking. **[have-a-heart.com]** FRANK GREEN

GLASS OF WATER: ANTHONY MARSLAND/GETTYONE; CLOCK: LAURA JOHANSEN

... see for yourself at gear.yahoo.com

YAHOO! Gear

GETAWAY GURU BY SUSAN BRESLOW SARDONE



EXPERT ESCAPES

Online specialists can customize your dream vacation

While it's easy enough to plan a Vegas vacation online, a more exotic trip often calls for complex arrangements. When it comes to getting travel advice, there's nothing like one-on-one guidance from an expert who can assist you in locating an out-of-the-way place, customize a visit to suit your particular interests, and book your getaway as well.

Fortunately, several sites can help you reach...if not Nirvana, then at least Kathmandu (above). At **12degrees [12degrees.com]**, travel writers serve as guides. You share your vacation fantasy with leading guidebook authors and receive an estimate on the cost of devising a custom itinerary (typically around $250). Once you're happy with the plan, a 12degrees agent handles the booking.

Produced in association with the National Geographic Society, **iExplore [iexplore.com]** provides free consultations via e-mail or phone on customized and package tours in more than 140 countries. Simon Carey, manager of iExplore's adventure experts, exemplifies their varied backgrounds. A former Peace Corps volunteer in Botswana, he ran a dive charter in the Seychelles. Costs range from $35 for night kayaking on Lake Michigan to $65,000 for scaling Mount Everest.

Not ready to start packing yet? Visit **VacationCoach.com**, where "profiling technology" delivers recommendations based on your personality, budget, and interests. Now, if only they could tell you how to pay for the trip....

EQUIPMENT

TRAVEL GEAR

ROADSIDE ATTRACTIVENESS

TravelSmith When it comes to designing stylish, easy-care clothing, TravelSmith seems to have thought of everything, from a featherweight women's leather jacket to full-length raincoats that tuck neatly into a wallet-size pouch. Pick a destination and get a customized packing list, or choose from TravelSmith customer favorites. Five-day weather forecasts for major cities worldwide can add to your packing know-how. **[travelsmith.com]**

TOOLS TO GO

Magellan's This site caters to nomadic gadget-lovers, peddling pocket-sized currency exchangers, water purifiers, and essential gear for the wired vagabond, such as a EuroSurge protector for your laptop and a hand-powered generator for your cell phone. Packing guides and a country-by-country database of electrical standards, health risks, and security concerns take the mystery out of shopping. **[magellans.com]**

HIGHWAY ESSENTIALS

Hit the Road This "drive-thru catalog" has all you could possibly need for your next cross-country pilgrimage, including trunk organizers, tire gauges, and guides to wacky roadside attractions. You'll even find the requisite tacky tourist trinkets, such as Route 66 shot glasses and dashboard hula girls. **[roadtripstore.com]**

MACDUFF EVERTON/GETTYONE

FIND YOUR WAY

Rand McNally: Travel Store From maps and packs to trip-planning software, the gear here's good to go – for navigating the road less traveled, and many of the world's busier highways, too. **[randmcnally.com/rmc/store/strTravelStore.jsp]** ALEXIS ADAMS

OUTDOORS

SUMMER SKIING

EURAIL PASS

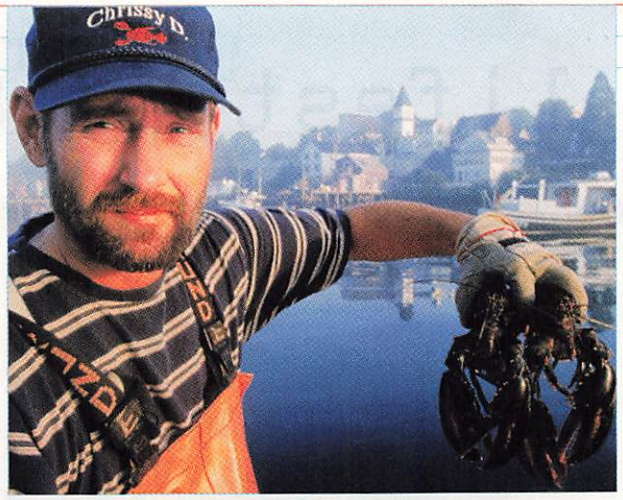
Ifyouski.com Does skiing Austria's Stubai Glacier appeal to your sense of adventure? At mountainous elevations as far south as Italy, you can find Continental slopes to shred – and this site is the perfect place to plan your escape. Browse hundreds of resorts in Europe, the U.S., and Canada via Flash maps and 360-degree panoramas, then consider user surveys and tempting off-season rates before making your final decision. To book an offered deal, click "Call Me" or send an e-mail query. **[ifyouski.com]**

KIWI COUNTRY

Snow.co.nz Just east of Australia you can ski all summer long. This sharply designed Web site can help you differentiate between New Zealand resorts such as Mount Dobson and Whakapapa, which is based on the side of an active volcano. Get a feel for the experience with the photo gallery and virtual tours of ski runs. For the off-the-slope hours, the Travel Planner describes local activities and events, dining choices, and lodging options. **[www.snow.co.nz]**

GLOBAL SNOW

RSN Don't put your faith in the reports generated by your destination resort; instead, see what's happening with your own two eyes. The Resort Sports Network offers a Web cam for virtually every mountainous locale in the world, ranging from Argentina (which has winter when we have summer) to Finland (which has winter...always). **[rsn.com]** BRYAN VANDYKE



SPECIAL EVENTS

FOOD FESTIVALS

PACK THE BIB

Maine Lobster Festival At last year's festival in Rockland, Maine, revelers consumed nearly eight tons of the succulent crustacean. Celebrating the state's maritime heritage, the five-day festival, August 1–5, this year boasts a Pride of the Coast parade; a race across the city's harbor over partially submerged lobster crates; and the coronation of the Maine Sea Goddess. All the information that you'll need is here, along with links to local lobster dealers, lots of tasty recipes, and a live lobster-trap cam. **[mainelobsterfestival.com]**

PACK THE FIRE HOSE

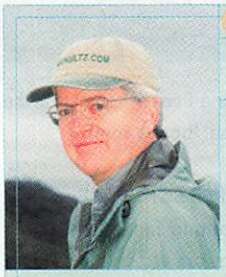
Celebrate Chiles at the Hatch Chile Festival The tiny farm community of Hatch, New Mexico, throws a grand party each Labor Day weekend. Join fans of the fiery fruit in the self-proclaimed Chile Capital of the World to sweat over plates of New Mexico green, watch the crowning of the Little Miss Chile Festival Queen, and pick up ancho, serrano, and jalapeño peppers by the bushel and the *ristra* (string of peppers). **[www.zianet.com/snm/chilfest.htm]**

PACK THE BREATH MINTS

Gilroy Garlic Festival The last full weekend of every July, garlic lovers gather by the thousands in Gilroy, California, to celebrate and consume what has been affectionately dubbed the "stinking rose." Get juicy details at the official site, where you can check the rules for the Great Garlic Cook-Off and browse last year's winning recipes. Will Rogers called Gilroy "the only town in America where you can marinate a steak just by hanging it on the clothesline." Need we say more? **[gilroygarlicfestival.com]** A.A.

EXPERT OPINION

ANGLING AUTHORITY KEN SCHULTZ



As Fishing Editor for *Field & Stream*, where he's been on staff for 23 years, Ken Schultz is his sport's Big Kahuna. His own site, **KenSchultz.com**, offers a sea of angling info, as well as a Meeting Dock, where visitors swap fish stories. Schultz likes to cast his line at these pages:

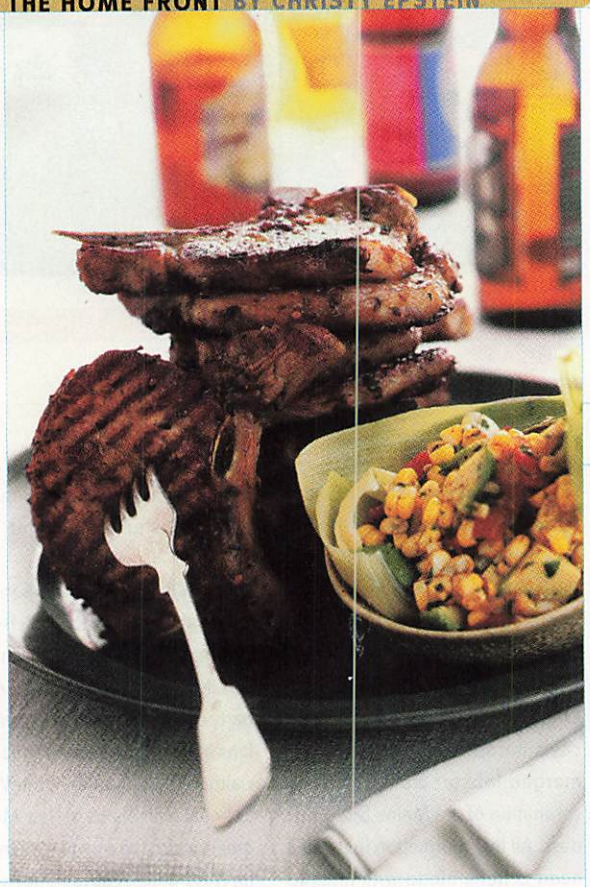
FIELD & STREAM/OUTDOOR LIFE A wealth of articles about fishing and hunting, plus information about weather and tides, humor articles, and audio files of selected Field & Stream Radio spots. **[fieldandstream.com]**

IGFA: INTERNATIONAL GAME FISH ASSOCIATION The nonprofit association certifies world-record as well as state-record fish, maintains rules for international angling, and lists fishing tournaments around the globe. **[igfa.org]**

AMERICAN SPORTFISHING ASSOCIATION Get information about the FishAmerica Foundation conservation program and the Fishing Tackle Loaner Program, which makes equipment available to angling groups and civic associations that host youth fishing events. Fun stuff includes a printable First Fish Certificate. **[asafishing.org]** HEIDI LAFLECHE

SCHULTZ: NANCY MARSHALL; LOBSTER: DAVID McLAIN/AURORA

THE HOME FRONT BY CHRISTY EPSTEIN



KNOW YOUR BARBIE

Fire up the browser before lighting the charcoal

If you haven't yet scrubbed last year's grease off the grates or cleared the gas lines of spiders, you'd better get cracking, because the mother of all grilling days is upon us: the Fourth of July. Whether filet mignon, burgers, or tofu pups are on the menu, the Web can lead you to barbecue nirvana.

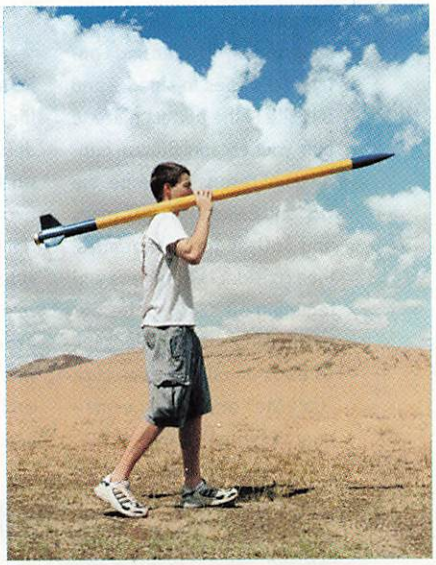
At **About: Barbecues and Grilling: Grills [bbq.about.com/food/bbq/cs/grills]** you can get the skinny on what tools will best suit your needs. Ready to put your gear to use? **Barbecue'n on the Internet [barbecuen.com]** covers everything from the basics to advanced secrets such as how to clean a deer and when to fuel your smoker with grapevines. Brush up on the barbecue's history, then brush your vittles with a zesty marinade from the recipe section.

For some of the kookiest accoutrements on either side of the Mississippi, click over to **National Barbecue News [barbecuenews.com]**. Friends are sure to be impressed when their steaks arrive branded with your personal logo. And don't forget your meat-free pals: Plenty of recipes for grilled tempeh, barbecued-mushroom sandwiches, and more can be found at **About: Vegetarian Cuisine: Vegetarian Grilling [vegetarian.about.com/food/vegetarian/library/weekly/aa051500a.htm]**. (Need tips on grilling equipment? See page 40.)

If you're hungering for a patriotic dessert this Fourth, head back into the kitchen and whip up the **Easy Flag Cake [gcards.com/4thjuly/recipesmain.html]**. Would you like to top off your celebration with some rockets' red glare? **Phantom Fireworks.com [fireworks.com]** can point you toward its legal U.S. sales outlets. Or you can opt for a more vicarious thrill and **Watch Real Fireworks on Your Computer! [fireworksland.com/html/videos.html]**.

KIDS & FAMILY

FUN & GAMES



BRAIN FOOD

Funology.com Who says there ain't no cure for the summertime blues? Mad scientists in training can check into the Laboratory to learn how to make rockets and fog – safely – at home. Junior Julia Childs can whip up treats for the whole family, including Fido. Youngsters also can get the buzz on the latest games, books, toys, and puzzles reviewed by Funologists – regular kids who know what real pint-size fun is. **[funology.com]**

SURFIN' SAFARI

Bonus.com Kids don't need to go over the rainbow to explore new worlds. At this site, five color-coded CyberWays lead to adventures around the Web. Follow the green Explore track and take a virtual field trip to England's Westminster Abbey or the Washington Monument. Purple is for Imagine, as in "imagine all the great stuff you can make with these recipes and craft projects." Or take the red road, Play, to experience games galore. Parents undoubtedly will appreciate the site's advertising-free environment in the kids' area. **[bonus.com]**

SUPER SOFTWARE

Kids Domain Talk about a gold mine! You can access thousands of freeware and shareware downloads and demos here, ranging from simple screen savers to sophisticated learning games. Parents run the colossal site, which includes programming tutorials for Bill Gates and Steve Jobs wanna-bes, as well as hundreds of up-to-date product reviews in the free e-mail newsletter. **[kidsdomain.com/kids.html]**

WALAIKA HASKINS

FOOD: BEATRIZ DA COSTA; BOY: WHIT PRESTON/GETTYONE

SPECIAL NEEDS

DISABILITY SITES

SILENT SECTOR

DeafZone Perhaps no disabled group has developed a closer-knit community than the deaf, who communicate in their own unique language. DeafZone provides links to sign-language sites, interpreters, and closed-captioning resources. On-site features include chatrooms, news updates, and a directory of e-mail addresses for individual deaf Americans. **[deafzone.com]**

WHEEL LIFE

GORP: People with Disabilities This Great Outdoor Recreation page points to wheelchair-accessible adventures, such as exploring a rain forest in Puerto Rico or the dunes along Oregon's coast. **[gorp.com/gorp/eclectic/disabled.htm]**

INDEPENDENT LIVING

WeMedia One of *Y-Life's* 100 Best Sites for 2001, WeMedia enables people with all types of special needs to find a job, buy a house, shop for helpful products, and much more. Known for its original news reporting, WeMedia had exclusive rights to Webcast the Sydney 2000 Paralympics. A pioneer in online access, the site is designed to work with a talking browser for the visually impaired. **[wemedia.com]**

BORN AGAIN

Jeff Galli's Web Site When Galli was 17, an automobile accident left him paralyzed. Instead of seeing him as a victim, he and his family viewed his misfortune as an opportunity for a new life. This intensely personal site describes Galli's rehabilitation and the various technologies that allow him a degree of independence. **[gallicentral.com/jeffhome.htm]** FRANK GREEN

EXPERT OPINION

DOMESTIC DIVA HELOISE

Heloise is, ahem, a household name. Since 1977, her syndicated newspaper column, "Hints from Heloise," has advised homemakers on tasks from stain busting to roach dusting. Online, she keeps house at **Hints from Heloise [heloise.com]** and likes to scour these sites:

WOMEN.COM: SPOTLIGHT ON COMMUNITY Members chat about everything from decorating on a budget to advice for new moms—which is what my mother started with the original Heloise column in 1959, before it was called "networking." **[women.com/membership/menu.html]**

INTERNATIONAL FABRICARE INSTITUTE Consumers can Ask the Expert if they have questions about cleaning their upholstery, a stain on the carpet, or clothing care. **[ifi.org]**

FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION The FDA site addresses safety concerns about what we eat. **[www.fda.gov]** HEIDI LAFLECHE

HOBBIES

CAR BUFFS

VINTAGE STEEL

My Classic Car Whoever thought Grandma's Chevelle would one day be cool? This companion site to the cable TV show has a photo gallery of restored dream machines – mostly American cars from the 1950s, '60s, and '70s – along with restoration tips for all those "certified car nuts." Ready to invest in your own labor of love? Search the Hemmings classifieds. **[myclassiccar.com]**

ROAD WARRIORS

Car Talk@Cars.com America's love-hate relationship with automobiles fuels the banter at the popular National Public Radio show *Car Talk*, and the Web site is no less engaging. Let your engine idle at Time Kill Central, and cruise by the personal ads to hook up with your fantasy Ferrari fanatic or Dodge Dart devotee. What was the worst car of the last millennium? To find out if it's yours, pull into the Special Features Library. **[cartalk.cars.com]**

GONE IN 60 SECONDS

Derek's Exotic Cars So you didn't become a dot-com millionaire and buy a fancy sports car, eh? You can still window-shop. Take a spin through this database of more than 250 international speedsters, from Alpha Romeo to Zender. The performance statistics and high-resolution photos are likely to make any driver drool. **[fantasycars.com/derek]**

BIG WHEELS

SUV OnLine Which car-truck hybrid kicks the most asphalt? Throw down on this site's Posting Boards, a pit stop for four-wheeling enthusiasts and status-conscious commuters. Don't miss the feature on Freightliner's Unimog – an updated German military transport that, at 9 feet 7 inches tall, dwarfs all other gas-guzzlers. (Gulp.) **[suv.com]** H.L.

CAR: JOHN TURNER/GETTYONE; HELOISE: MICHAEL KEEL/KING FEATURES SYNDICATE 2000

Fatal Liaison CONTINUED FROM PAGE 99

no makeup and shapeless men's clothes, his first and second reactions were surely surprise and fear, not necessarily in that order.

"Hi," she said, smiling encouragingly at the spiky-haired boy in Nike Trainers and holding out her hand to him in greeting. "Hi," he said back, briefly grasping her outstretched hand. Anxious to get Ofir out of the bus station, Muna pulled him quickly into a cab and gave an address in north Jerusalem, where Muna had parked a battered Ford Escort she had borrowed. Driving through a checkpoint, Ofir turned to Muna and asked her why there were so many soldiers. "Don't worry," she reassured him. "It's always like this in Jerusalem."

The final communication sent by Ofir from his cell phone was to a friend who had called to ask why he didn't show up for school. "Can't talk now. I'll explain later," he replied. It was his last message.

Muna told him they were going to the house of a friend. But according to police reports and Muna's later testimony, she instead drove Ofir to a deserted lot just inside the Palestinian Authority territory. Muna then received a call to her mobile phone. She pulled the car over to flip open her cell.

As she drew to a stop, al-Qadi approached Ofir's side of the car, brandishing a loaded Kalashnikov AK-47 rifle and ordering Ofir out of the car. Trapped, Ofir refused. Perhaps surprised by his resistance, al-Qadi shot him in the leg. But Ofir only resisted more, gripping the steering wheel and shouting for help. Al-Qadi and another accomplice then pumped up to 15 more bullets into his 16-year-old body, later dumping his bloody remains in a makeshift grave.

Back in Ashkelon, Ofir's parents worried all evening. They tried calling his friends and contacting Ofir on his cell phone, to no avail. Although his cell phone was still turned on, he didn't answer calls, nor did he return text messages. Finally his father went to Ofir's computer, opened a chat file (something he had never done before), and spotted the conversations. "And there it was; they were going to meet that very day," Shalom Rahum said. Ofir's family reported his absence to police and prayed he had simply been mugged.

Logging into Ofir's account, his family sent out these messages:

1/17/01 23:36 are you there????

1/17/01 23:39 is anyone there????

1/17/01 23:45 anyone????

Muna had unsuccessfully searched her car for Ofir's cell phone after his death, knowing that it could provide incriminating evidence. Ofir had slipped it, still turned on, into his jeans pocket during the car journey with Muna. Police experts traced Ofir's cell phone and call records to Ramallah. Less than 24 hours later, with the help of local residents, his body was returned to Israel and positively identified by the family.

Al-Qadi and the other man escaped to Palestinian-controlled territory—a safe haven where the Israeli police could not apprehend them. Muna's mistake was that she went home to Bir Naballah, an area that is jointly controlled by Palestinian and Israeli authorities. She claims she did not intend for Ofir to be shot. Her agenda, she continues to say, had been to draw attention to Palestinian suffering. Many Israelis believe otherwise.

The courts have yet to decide. Amneh Muna was indicted in March on charges of manslaughter. She says she wanted a journalistic scoop, an exclusive photo-op that would make the whole world sit up in horror at the Palestinian situation, just as she was horrified by the funerals she covered, the mangled bodies she saw on the Web. "I wanted to shake Israeli public opinion," she said in her statement to the Israeli security agency Shin Bet. "I wanted to transmit a message to the world and to Israel against the killing of Palestinian children and youth in the Alaqsa Intifada." At her first appearance in court, looking sallow and drained in the wash of dozens of flash bulbs, Muna complained of bad treatment at the hands of her investigators from Shin Bet. During her interrogation, Muna stressed that her plan had been to hold Ofir prisoner until his weeping mother would agree to appear on television with Palestinian mothers whose sons had been killed by the Israeli military. Once she had had her public relations coup, she claimed, she would have released Ofir to the Israeli authorities, safe and sound.

Muna is sticking to her story. Regardless, it's clear that al-Qadi had other plans, whether they were his original idea or not. The trial may shed more light on al-Qadi's involvement and Muna's actual motivation.

But we do know that, according to the Israeli military charge sheet, Ofir was not the first Israeli boy Muna met and wooed online. She had established relationships with two other Israeli males from Jerusalem, both times contacting them via the ICQ portal. By surveying their online profiles, as she had done with Ofir, Muna was able to handpick potential chat pals. Back in October, she had established relations with a religious teenager from Jerusalem, as well as with an Israeli in his twenties. She was unable to get either of them to visit her in Ramallah.

Muna has been in solitary confinement since her arrest two days after Ofir's killing. Her trial began last April but, owing to the complexity of the case, has been postponed several times. She said she hadn't seen the sun for 60 days. Ofir's father replied: "Neither has my son." She later told this reporter she wanted a real hit for the Palestinians—a bold move for her people, so they "could live." She wanted to be Joan of Arc.

Ofir's fantasy was to attract enough surfers to warrant commercial funding for his site. Ironically, a record number of surfers visited Ofir's Web site after his death, and to date, there have been more than 150,000 entries. Instead of Joan of Arc, Muna has become something of a Palestinian O.J. Simpson, her every movement and her case's every development followed rabidly throughout the Middle East. Hassan al-Qadi's fate is already sealed: The house in which he was sheltered was destroyed, killing him and two young children—a brother and sister—whose family was living in the building. Israeli authorities have denied responsibility for the explosion, suggesting that it might have been a homegrown bomb-making accident. The nationwide outrage over the death of Ofir Rahum suggests otherwise.

A certain stillness hangs over the Rahum household today. A memorial candle flickers softly in a corner of the kitchen. The television in the lounge continues to pump out cartoons throughout the afternoon, but no one is really watching them anymore. Ofir Rahum's computer is occasionally used by the family, usually to update his Web site and check out the continuous stream of condolence messages from all over the world. His parents have no plans to ban computers or the Internet from their home. They simply hope that others will learn from their son's experience.

They visit Ofir's grave frequently. The computer-shaped headstone—painstakingly carved in gray marble, complete with keyboard—was a natural choice for the family. ■

Joanna Chen is a reporter for *Newsweek* based in the Middle East.

People's Net CONTINUED FROM PAGE 83

mind-melding of some 14-year-old kid and his computer—such as Neil Cicierega, who created the brilliant parody of consumer culture called **Hyakugojyuuichi!! [animutation.mixnmojo.com/info/info2.html]**—becomes a conversation piece around the watercooler in thousands of offices all over the world. Powerful stuff.

It gets better. Thousands of hackers worldwide still represent a threat to major software companies, the DVD industry, and any corporation whose interests rely on closed-source computer code or encrypted files. No sooner is a new closed standard released than it is decoded and published by a lone hacker—or by a team of hackers working in tandem from remote and untraceable locations. Activists of all stripes have also seized upon the Internet to cultivate relationships across vast distances and promote new alliances between formerly unaffiliated groups. The Internet-organized demonstrations against World Trade Organization meetings in Seattle and Quebec are only the most notable examples of such networking.

In spite of the many efforts to direct its chaotic, organismic energy toward the monolithic agenda of Wall Street, the Internet can't help but empower the real people whose spirit it embodies. I've mentioned only a few of the thousands of equally vital new buds blooming on the Internet today. They thrive because they promote the life of the Internet itself. They are not parasites but fruit, capable of spreading their own seeds and carrying the Internet's tendrils even further. They *are* the Internet.

They share the very qualities that make the Internet so compelling and valuable: transparency, participation, openness, and collaboration. Theirs are the ideals and communities that allowed the Internet to fend off efforts to harness its power for a single, selfish objective. They are also what will keep the Internet resilient enough to withstand the next attack.

So do not mourn. Rejoice. While you may never be able to sell that great dot-com name or make a bundle on that tech stock you bought last year, you're getting to participate in something that no civilization in the history of the planet has ever had the privilege of experiencing until now: the Internet. ■

Douglas Rushkoff is the author of seven books, including *Coercion: Why We Listen to What "They" Say* and *Media Virus*. His forthcoming novel *Exit Strategy* will be excerpted in *Y-Life* next month.

Sotheby's CONTINUED FROM PAGE 103

general manager of eBay Premier, concedes that the failure was "a real disappointment," but points to "particularly high" reserve prices, adding that nearly everything else on the block sold, with about 60 percent going to online bidders. "People still don't feel comfortable spending millions online for art," he says, "but it's a matter of creating the right environment. Just remember that 15 years ago telephone bidding was new, and now 30 to 40 percent of the bidding at live auctions is on the phone."

Although Sothebys.com seems more than willing to hop on the pop-culture bandwagon (three weeks before the eBay sale, it offered for auction Monroe memorabilia that included the wedding dress from her first marriage), it continues to rely principally on cachet. "With a name like Sotheby's," says David Redden, "there's no reason that items with a great appeal to the imagination can't sell for high prices online." Instead of adding new wrinkles, Sothebys.com is putting online still more of the items it used to sell in its auction rooms, including its prestigious annual contemporary art sale. And the site is also resorting to a time-honored method of increasing revenues: raising the price, which in this case means increasing the fee buyers pay to Sothebys.com to 15 percent (from 10 percent) on most sales. "In the long run, I don't think there is anything that won't work online," Redden adds. "After all, we're not trying to sell perfume. We're selling something visual, and the Internet is a visual medium. It's just going to take time."

Perhaps. But selling fine art outside the auction room means thinking more aggressively outside the auction room. At Cleveland-based **Ewolfs.com**—the only offline auction house now completely online—director Michael Wolf says that online auctions won't take off until they cater to viewers who look to technological sophistication for comfort and reassurance: "Recently a couple came to our warehouse to inspect a table they wanted to bid on. But when they saw it, they made a beeline for the online presentation, which showed the table from angles you could get only by turning it upside down." To Wolf, online auctions have to appeal to such tech-savvy types if they are to survive. "These people judge us by how we put our site together," he says. "When they like what they see, they feel as if they can believe in the property." ■

Gwenda Blair, the author of *The Trumps: Three Generations That Built an Empire*, writes for *Forbes ASAP*, *Talk*, and *Smart Money*.

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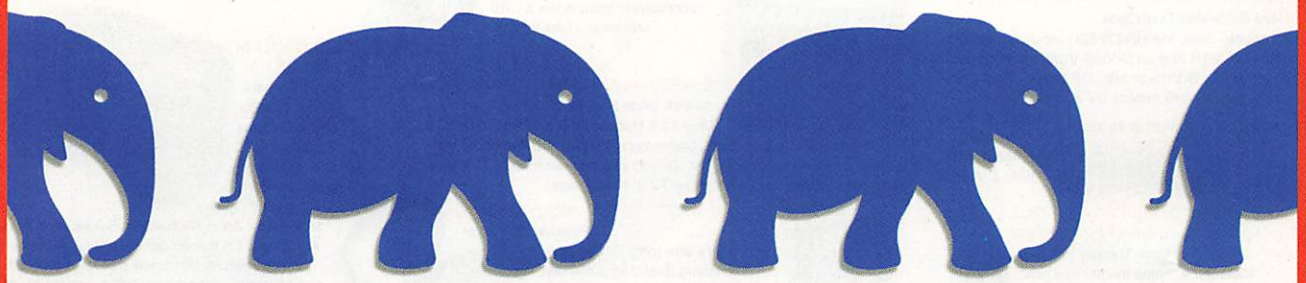

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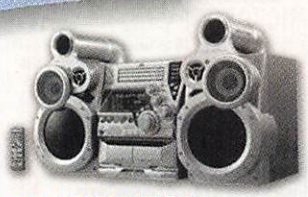

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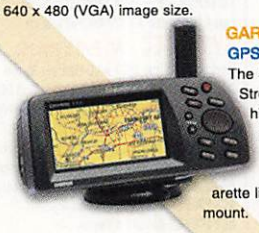

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SONY DCR-PC110 DV CAMCORDER
DV Camcorder

The DCR-PC110 Mega Handycam features a special Carl Zeiss T* Lens Coating, video-mail feature, automatic pop-up flash for quality still images and multiple connectivity options like a USB terminal, i.Link (in/out).

JVC HR-DVS2 MINI DV/S-VHS DUAL DECK
Mini DV/S-VHS Dual Deck

A double deck, the HR-DVS2U incorporates a Mini DV VCR and an S-VHS VCR, allowing direct playback of S-VHS or Mini DV tapes Direct dubbing from S-VHS to Mini DV and vice versa, or connect directly to your DV camcorder for DV-to-DV edits.

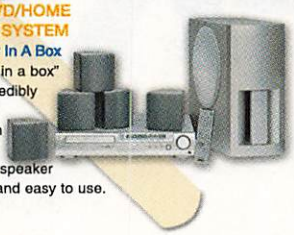
SAMSUNG SLK-407W DTV-COMPATIBLE
40-Inch Wide Screen LCD Television

Only 13.7 inches deep and less than 60 lbs. DTV-compatible (480P) using Samsung's unique LCD-based optical engine to deliver a crisp, bright 40-inch wide screen image. The ideal solution for those who want more TV in less space.

NIKON COOLPIX SERIES
Digital Camera

The CoolPix SeriesFeatures Megapixel CCD with true (non-interpolated) image resolution (2048 x 1536), 2.5x Zoom-Nikkor lens, 5-Area Multi Area Autofocus, 1.5 frames per second full resolution image capture, 30 frames per second QVGA, and 15 frames per second QVGA movies for 40 seconds in Motion-JPEG Mode.

SONY DAV-S300 DVD/HOME THEATER SYSTEM
Home Theater In A Box



Making the "home theater in a box" concept a reality, the incredibly affordable DAV-S300 integrates a combination receiver/DVD player with a 6-speaker package and all the speaker wire needed Easy to install and easy to use.

SONY D-EJ925
Portable CD Player

It's slim (only 9/16" thick!), it's strong (featuring a die-cast titanium body), and it gives you up to 80 hours of playback, using the supplied NiMH rechargeable battery pack and 2 (optional) "AA"s in the supplied external case. Go anywhere and do just about anything - this portable can keep the pace.

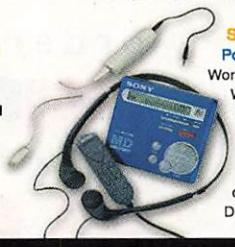
CANON PRO90 IS
Digital Camera

Features 3.3 Megapixel Image Sensor, 2.6 Megapixel effective Resolution, Built-In Image Stabilizer, 10x optical zoom, Integrated Flash. Offers you a huge range of focal lengths, from 37 mm (equiv.) to 370 mm (equiv.).

TECHNICS DVD-A10N
Audio/Video DVD Player

Super-high performance audio playback from DVD Audio Discs, a new world standard for home audio reproduction, Also plays back DVD Video Discs, Video CDs and Compact Discs for compatibility with a wide variety of formats.

SONY MZ-700DPC
Portable MiniDisc Player/Recorder



World's Smallest and Lightest Recording MD Walkman. Combines digital quality recording and superb sound reproduction. Less than 1" thick and virtually as small as a MiniDisc itself. Allows editing during playback and recording. Name bank for 600 characters. High Quality Recording with Digital Automatic Gain Control Small size.

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JULY 2001 »

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a tear-out index of the sites in this issue

FEATURES »

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- METAFILTER | metafilter.com
- SLASHDOT | slashdot.org
- PLASTIC | plastic.com
- YAHOO! GROUPS | groups.yahoo.com
- ALTERNET.ORG | alternet.org
- DOUBLECLICK | doubleclick.com
- NERVE.COM | nerve.com
- SHOUTCAST | shoutcast.com
- TECH SUPPORT GUY | helponthe.net
- INFOPLEASE.COM: ALMANAC SEARCH | infoplease.com/almanacs.html
- STUDYWEB | www.studyweb.com
- TRANSPARENT LANGUAGE | transparent.com
- NATIONALGEOGRAPHIC.COM: MAPS & GEOGRAPHY | nationalgeographic.com/maps
- VOYCABULARY | www.voycabulary.com
- NOLO: LEGAL ENCYCLOPEDIA | nolo.com/encyclopedia

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ASK THE SURF GURU » You've got questions, he's got answers » www.yil.com/guru

YOUR YASTROLOGER » What joy or pain do the stars have in store for you? Check your wired horoscope each weekday » www.yil.com/yastro

NET RADIO STATION OF THE DAY » If it's audible, someone's Webcasting it » www.yil.com/radio

PRETTY STRANGE » Sites your mother warned you about » www.yil.com/strange

BACK ISSUES » The way we were » www.yil.com/backissues

- ALL YOUR BASE ARE BELONG TO US! | allyourbase.org
- BUDWIZER.COM: WASSUP PAGE | budwizer.com/wassup.html
- HYAKUGOJYUUICHI!! | animutation.mixnmojo.com/info/info2.htm

50 MOST INCREDIBLY USEFUL SITES pages 86-93

TRAVEL

- NATIONAL PARK GUIDE | www.nps.gov/parks.html
- MAPBLAST! | mapblast.com
- METROPLANET | metropla.net
- U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE: TRAVEL AND LIVING ABROAD | state.gov/travel
- QUIKBOOK | quikbook.com
- FODORS.COM | fodors.com

REFERENCE

- TIMETICKER | timeticker.com
- FINDTUTORIALS.COM | findtutorials.com
- BARTLEBY.COM: REFERENCE | bartleby.com/reference
- FEDSTATS | www.fedstats.gov
- ALTAVISTA | av.com

FINANCE

- TAXPLANET.COM | taxplanet.com
- JUSTQUOTES.COM | justquotes.com
- BANKRATE.COM | bankrate.com
- SMARTMONEY.COM: BROKER METER | smartmoney.com/brokermeter
- HOOVER'S ONLINE | hooversonline.com
- OANDA.COM | oanda.com

ENTERTAINMENT

- MOVIES.COM | movies.com
- IFILM | ifilm.com
- MATCH.COM | match.com
- ESPN.COM | espn.com
- GIST TV LISTINGS | gist.com

COMMUNICATIONS

- TELLME | tellme.com
- SEARCHBUG: PACKAGE TRACKING | searchbug.com/packages
- HOMESTEAD | homestead.com

HEALTH

- HELPCENTER | helping.apa.org
- HEALTHGRADES | healthgrades.com
- NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH: HEALTH INFORMATION | www.nih.gov/health

HOME

- EMBARK | embark.com
- HOMESCAPE.COM | homescape.com
- EXP SYSTEMS | exp.com
- LIVEMANUALS | livemanuals.com
- EPICURIOUS | epicurious.com
- MSN HOMEADVISOR | homeadvisor.com

SHOPPING

- GÓMEZ.COM | gomez.com
- OVERSTOCK.COM | overstock.com
- ACTIVE BUYER'S GUIDE | activebuyersguide.com
- ABEBOOKS.COM | abebooks.com
- J.D. POWER CONSUMER CENTER | jdpower.com
- CONSUMER PROTECTION | www.ftc.gov/ftc/consumer.htm
- BUYERZONE.COM | buyerzone.com

AUTO

- NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION | www.nhtsa.dot.gov
- CARFAX | carfax.com

SUPREMELY USEFUL SITES

- CBSHEALTHWATCH BY MEDSCAPE | cbs.medscape.com
- CARSDIRECT.COM | carsdirect.com
- MORNINGSTAR.COM | morningstar.com
- WEATHER.COM | weather.com
- MONSTER.COM | monster.com
- EXPEDIA.COM | expedia.com
- TRAVELOCITY.COM | travelocity.com
- CITYSEARCH.COM | citysearch.com
- YOURDICTIONARY.COM | yourdictionary.com
- UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE: ZIP CODE LOOK-UP | usps.com/ncsc/lookups/lookups.htm
- 555-1212.COM | 555-1212.com
- THE INTERNET MOVIE DATABASE | imdb.com
- OFOTO | ofoto.com
- ASKME.COM | askme.com
- FREEMERCHANT.COM | freemerchant.com

10 INTERNET ESSENTIALS

- YAHOO! | yahoo.com
- GOOGLE | google.com
- DEJA POWER SEARCH | exit109.com/~jeremy/news/deja.html
- METACRAWLER | metacrawler.com
- CNET SEARCH.COM | search.com
- SAFEWEB | safeweb.com

GUEST GUIDE
- UNDERGROUNDONLINE | ugo.com
- GODDESSES | www.goddesses.com
- POETRY.COM | poetry.com
- JET PROPULSION LABORATORY | jpl.nasa.gov

SPORTS
- TENNISONLINE | tennisonline.com
- THE ALL ENGLAND LAWN TENNIS AND CROQUET CLUB | www.wimbledon.org
- CBS SPORTSLINE.COM: TENNIS | sportsline.com/tennis
- RACQUET RESEARCH | racquetresearch.com

MUSIC
- THE BLUE FLAME CAFE | blueflamecafe.com
- THE BLUE HIGHWAY | thebluehighway.com
- JUNIOR'S JUKE JOINT | deltablues.net
- MUSIC MAKER RELIEF FOUNDATION | musicmaker.org

MOVIES
- APE FEST: THE ULTIMATE IN PLANET OF THE APES | geocities.com/hollywood/1170
- RULE THE PLANET | planetoftheapes.com
- TIM BURTON'S PLANET OF THE APES | planetoapes.terrashare.com
- THAT WEBSITE ABOUT TIM BURTON | efanguide.com/~timburton

HEALTH & FITNESS page 112

VITAL SIGNS
- UAB TRAVELERS' HEALTH CLINIC | start.tripprep.com/uabtraveldoc
- CHINOOK MEDICAL GEAR INC. | chinookmed.com
- TRAVEL MEDICINE | travmed.com

LIFE SPANS
- WORLD HEALTH NETWORK | worldhealth.net
- LIFE EXTENSION FOUNDATION | lef.org
- CBS HEALTHWATCH BY MEDSCAPE | cbsmedscape.com

MENTAL HEALTH
- BEFRIENDERS INTERNATIONAL | befriendersinternational.org
- PSYCH CENTRAL | psychcentral.com
- HAVE A HEART'S DEPRESSION RESOURCE | have-a-heart.com

TRAVEL & RECREATION

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GETAWAY GURU
- 12DEGREES | 12degrees.com
- IEXPLORE | iexplore.com
- VACATIONCOACH.COM | vacationcoach.com

EXPERT OPINION
- KENSCHULTZ.COM | kenschultz.com
- FIELD & STREAM/OUTDOOR LIFE | fieldandstream.com
- IGFA: INTERNATIONAL GAME FISH ASSOCIATION | igfa.org
- AMERICAN SPORTFISHING ASSOCIATION | asafishing.org

EQUIPMENT
- TRAVELSMITH | travelsmith.com
- MAGELLAN'S | magellans.com
- HIT THE ROAD | roadtripstore.com
- RAND MCNALLY: TRAVEL STORE | randmcnally.com/rmc/store/strTravelStore.jsp

OUTDOORS
- IFYOUSKI.COM | ifyouski.com
- SNOW.CO.NZ | www.snow.co.nz
- RSN | rsn.com

SPECIAL EVENTS
- MAINE LOBSTER FESTIVAL | mainelobsterfestival.com
- CELEBRATE CHILES AT THE HATCH CHILE FESTIVAL | www.zianet.com/snm/chilfest.htm
- GILROY GARLIC FESTIVAL | gilroygarlicfestival.com

LIFESTYLE & COMMUNITY

pages 118-119

THE HOME FRONT
- ABOUT: BARBECUES AND GRILLING: GRILLS | bbq.about.com/food/bbq/cs/grills
- BARBECUE'N ON THE INTERNET | barbecuen.com
- NATIONAL BARBECUE NEWS | barbecuenews.com
- ABOUT: VEGETARIAN CUISINE: VEGETARIAN GRILLING | vegetarian.about.com/food/vegetarian/library/weekly/aa051500a.htm
- EASY FLAG CAKE | gcards.com/4thjuly/recipesmain.html
- PHANTOM FIREWORKS.COM | fireworks.com
- WATCH REAL FIREWORKS ON YOUR COMPUTER! | fireworksland.com/html/videos.html

EXPERT OPINION
- HINTS FROM HELOISE | heloise.com
- WOMEN.COM: SPOTLIGHT ON COMMUNITY | women.com/membership/menu.html
- INTERNATIONAL FABRICARE INSTITUTE | ifi.org
- FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION | www.fda.gov

KIDS & FAMILY
- FUNOLOGY.COM | funology.com
- BONUS.COM | bonus.com
- KIDS DOMAIN | kidsdomain.com/kids.html

SPECIAL NEEDS
- DEAFZONE | deafzone.com
- GORP: PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES | gorp.com/gorp/eclectic/disabled.htm
- WEMEDIA | wemedia.com
- JEFF GALLI'S WEB SITE | gallicentral.com/jeffhome.htm

HOBBIES
- MY CLASSIC CAR | myclassiccar.com
- CAR TALK@CARS.COM | cartalk.cars.com
- DEREK'S EXOTIC CARS | fantasycars.com/derek
- SUV ONLINE | suv.com

PRETTY STRANGE page 126
- WWW.IFOUNDADUCK.COM | www.ifoundaduck.com
- WOMEN WITH BEARDS | www.dds.nl/~beards
- THE W. SCHLOCKMAN CORPORATION | wschlockman.com
- DIMBULB INC. | dimbulb.com
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- VERADO | verado.com/forms/get_verado_game_1.shtml
- ISKETCH | www.isketch.net
- WRESTLESTOCK | wrestlestock.com
- MCY.COM | www.mcy.com
- VINX | vinx.com
- PUBLIC ENEMY LIVE FROM SAN FRANCISCO | publicenemy.com/mpe.php
- HOLEMUSIC.COM | hole.com
- AMAZON.COM: REDHOT.ORG | amazon.com/music-redhot
- FEMME FATALE | femmefatale.nu
- ALL MY CHILDREN FANS CHAT | allmychildren.about.com/tvradio/allmychildren/mpchat.htm
- MACSHOWLIVE.COM | macshowlive.com
- BASEBALL WITH BASEBALL WEEKLY'S BOB NIGHTENGALE | usatoday.com/community/chat/chatsked.htm
- FAZE: IV | www.virtuetv.com/radio/faze4
- THIS AMERICAN LIFE | wbur.org

COOL TOOLS pages 54-55

- TERAPIN | goterapin.com
- WHERIFY | wherifywireless.com
- SWISSARMY.COM | swissarmy.com
- KESSEL | mywavelink.com
- ETHENTICATOR | ethentica.com
- NAKAMICHI | nakamichi.com

WEB USER pages 57-59

FIND IT

- GOOGLE | google.com
- VIVÍSIMO | vivisimo.com
- NORTHERN LIGHT | northernlight.com

QUICK TIPS

- MYVITALAGENT | www.myvitalagent.com
- CNET: DOWNLOAD.COM | download.com

LEARN IT

- MUSICMATCH JUKEBOX 6.0 | musicmatch.com/home
- REALJUKEBOX BASIC | real.com
- WINAMP | winamp.com
- WINDOWS MEDIA PLAYER 7 | windowsmedia.com
- ULTRAPLAYER | ultraplayer.com
- REALPLAYER 8 | real.com
- QUICKTIME PLAYER 5 | apple.com/quicktime
- SHOCKWAVE/FLASH PLAYER | sdc.shockwave.com/shockwave/download
- SHOCKWAVE.COM | shockwave.com
- IPIX VIEWER | ipix.com

SURF GURU

- RADIOSHACK.COM | radioshack.com
- MICROSOFT WINDOWS UPDATE | windowsupdate.microsoft.com

TALK OF THE NET pages 72-75

- ALTERNET.ORG: SCHOOL SHOOTINGS AND WHITE DENIAL | alternet.org/wise
- ALTERNET.ORG | alternet.org
- ANIMUTATION CENTRAL | animutation.com
- FLASH MOVIES: KUNG FU STYLE | sfdt.com/flash/movies/296.html
- LUDDITE | luddite.com
- LATTJO LAJBAN | tv4.se/lattjo/kojan/bilbanan
- AGELESS | coolstop.com/ageless
- DAVEZILLA | davezilla.com/archives/00000065.html
- NETFLIX | netflix.com
- STAIR DIVING | www.404.org/dive
- TOTAL-CRICKET | total-cricket.com
- CLICKCRICKET.COM | clickcricket.com
- CRICLIVE | criclive.com
- TEHELKA.COM | tehelka.com
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- CRICKET IS INJURIOUS TO NATION | sivaraj.freeyellow.com/cricket.html
- GEOCACHING | geocaching.com
- A IS FOR ABSINTHE | graphomanic.net/alpha/alpha.html
- ZEN | www.do-not-zzz.com
- PSYCHO-EX | psychoexgirlfriend.com
- NEWSTROLLS | newstrolls.com
- SPIN THE BOTTLE DOT COM | spinthebottle.com

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- NATIONAL MARFAN FOUNDATION | marfan.org
- ABILITY ONLINE | ablelink.org
- PATCHWORX | www.patchworx.org
- KIDSHEALTH | kidshealth.com
- ABOUTOURKIDS.ORG | www.aboutourkids.org

WEB GUIDE»

NEW, NOTABLE & FUN

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- YAHOO! INTERNET LIFE | yil.com
- EW.COM | ew.com
- QUICKEN.COM | quicken.com
- LEGALZOOM.COM | legalzoom.com
- FOREIGNBORN.COM | foreignborn.com
- YAHOO! BROADCAST | broadcast.yahoo.com
- ABCNEWS.COM | abcnews.com
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- AOL | aol.com
- LYCOS TALK RADIO | talkradio.lycos.com
- DEMARCHELIER.NET | www.demarchelier.net
- ZOOZOOM.COM | zoozoom.com
- TODDSKINNER.COM | toddskinner.com
- POLITICALCIRCUS.COM | politicalcircus.com
- CHRISTIANITYTODAY.COM | christianitytoday.com
- FILMWISE | filmwise.com
- ONLINE CLASSICS | www.onlineclassics.com
- SPORTSJONES | sportsjones.com
- SPORTS.COM | sports.com
- FOLLOW THE SUN | www.nla.gov.au/exhibitions/sun
- BART PRINCE: ARCHITECT | bartprince.com
- ESPN.COM: PAGE 2 | espn.go.com/page2
- WWW.RALPHSTEADMAN.COM | ralphsteadman.com

ENTERTAINMENT & SPORTS

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TRENDSPOTTING

- MTV.COM | mtv.com

Gateway Performance™ 1300CS

- CNET HELP.COM | help.com
- YAHOO! EVENTS | broadcast.com
- JUMBO! | jumbo.com
- SPYONIT | spyonit.com

FATAL LIAISON
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- INTIFAWDA.COM | www.intifawda.com

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- SOTHEBYS.COM | sothebys.com
- ARTNET.COM | artnet.com
- EBAY PREMIER | ebaypremier.com
- EWOLFS.COM | ewolfs.com

I AM A B-A-A-AD EBAYER
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- MODERN HUMORIST | modernhumorist.com

COLUMNS»

ANGELA GUNN: NET ETHICS
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- F---ED COMPANY | f---edcompany.com
- BLOGGER | blogger.com

ROBERT SCHEER: PRIVACY WATCH page 70
- CHOICEPOINT | www.choicepoint.net
- CHOICEPOINT ONLINE FOR THE FBI | www.cpfbi.com

DEPARTMENTS»

CLICK! AROUND THE NET
pages 25-30
- MUTATO | www.mutato.com
- CLUB DEVO | clubdevo.com
- THE INTERNET MOVIE DATABASE | imdb.com
- SCOOPME!: GIVE BUFFY AN EMMY CAMPAIGN | scoopme.com/gbae
- GOD BLESS THE GOGO'S | www.gogos.com
- AMERICAN FAMILY IMMIGRATION HISTORY CENTER | ellisislandrecords.org
- NBA.COM | nba.com
- SOUND PORTRAITS.ORG | soundportraits.org
- JUPITER MEDIA METRIX | jmm.com
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- UPROAR | uproar.com
- AMAZON.COM | amazon.com
- BLONDE BOMB SHELL | clubs.yahoo.com/clubs/blondebombshell
- NOT PROUD | notproud.com/confessed.html
- MARKWAHLBERGFAN.COM | markwahlbergfan.com
- GOOGLE | google.com
- LEXIS-NEXIS BY CREDIT CARD: AVAILABLE PRODUCTS | web.lexis.com/xchange/ccsubs/cc_prods.asp

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- MYSPACE | myspace.com
- XDRIVE | xdrive.com
- BATTERIES.COM | batteries.com
- WESERVEHOMES.COM | weservehomes.com

CLICK! OLD WAY/NET WAY
pages 34-35
- MILLE BORNES RULES | www.centralconnector.com/GAMES/Milleborne.html
- HASBRO | hasbro.com
- WINNING MOVES GAMES | winning-moves.com
- YOURGROCER.COM | yourgrocer.com
- COSTCO.COM | costco.com
- CONSUMER REPORTS ONLINE | consumerreports.org

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- SMART BARGAINS | www.smartbargains.com
- OVERSTOCK.COM | overstock.com
- BLUEFLY | bluefly.com
- BARPOINT.COM | barpoint.com
- DINER-MITE DINERS | dinermite.com

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- JOBSONLINE | jobsonline.com
- MILESPREE REWARDS | milespree.com
- THE DMA'S E-MAIL PREFERENCE SERVICE | e-mps.org/en
- THE GAMEMASTER ONLINE | gamemasteronline.com
- CASINOMEISTER | casinomeister.com
- WINNERONLINE.COM | winneronline.com
- IGC: INTERACTIVE GAMING COUNCIL | igcouncil.org
- ONLINE PLAYERS ASSOCIATION | onlineplayersassociation.com
- NATIONAL CONSUMERS LEAGUE | nclnet.org

STYLE: SITES & SCENES page 40
- WEBER | www.weber.com
- STONEWALL KITCHEN | stonewallkitchen.com
- COOKING.COM | cooking.com
- WILLIAMS-SONOMA | williams-sonoma.com
- TABLETOOLS.COM | tabletools.com

STYLE: ASK WARREN page 42
- ROCKPORT | rockport.com
- COLE HAAN | www.colehaan.com
- PHILOSOPHY | philosophystore.com
- COACH | coach.com
- ELUXURY | eluxury.com
- KENNETH COLE | kennethcole.com

STYLE: BAZAAR page 44
- POLO.COM | polo.com
- NIKETOWN USA | niketown.com
- TOMMY.COM | tommy.com
- SWATCH | swatch.com

CONTENT pages 46-49
- LIVEREADS | livereads.com
- JACOBYTE BOOKS | jacobytebooks.com
- OPERATIONSWORDFISH | operationswordfish.com
- FILMFILM.COM | filmfilm.com
- HYPNOTIC | hypnotic.com
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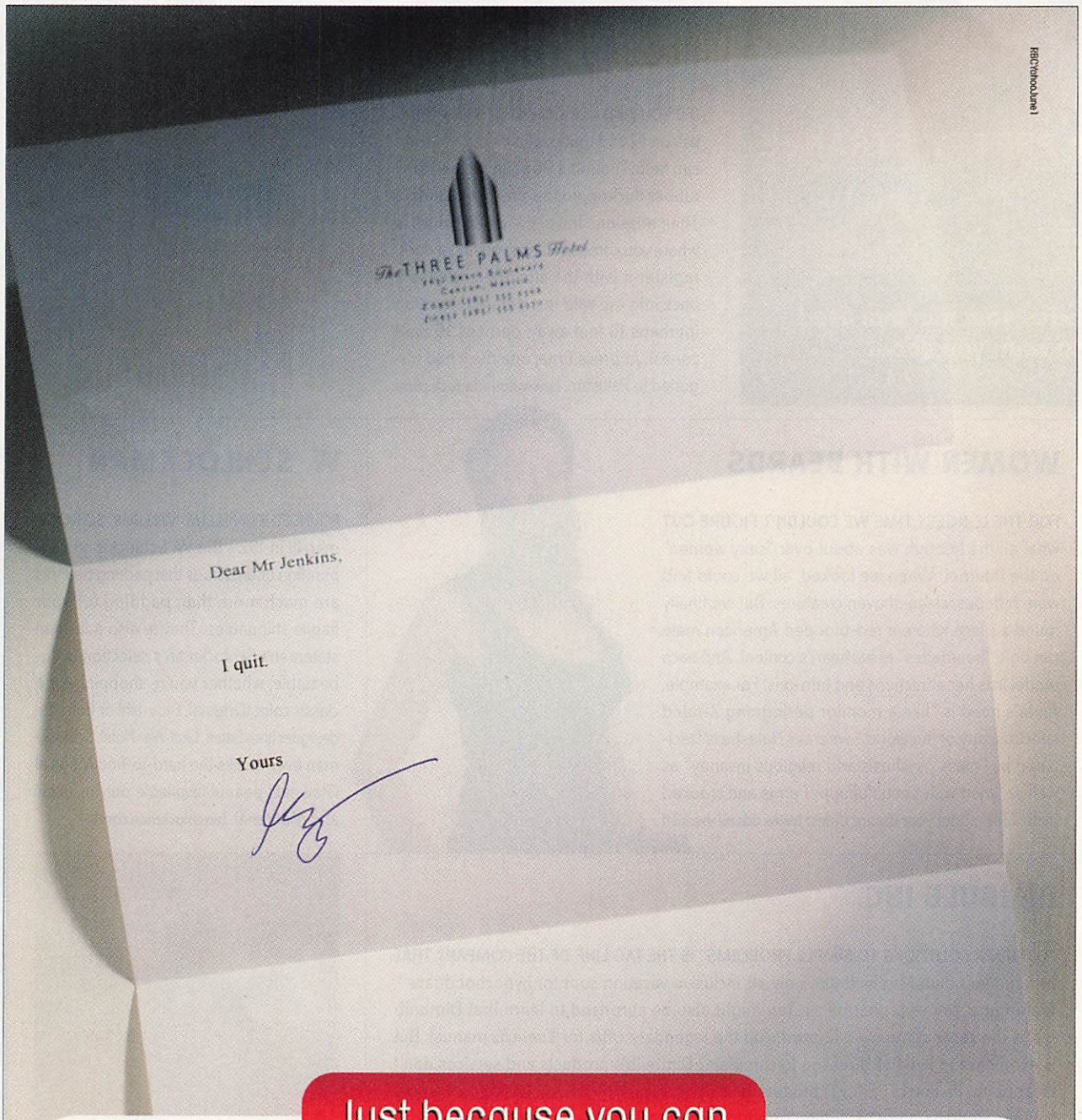

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*Conditions apply : Purchase $25, get another $25 FREE. See site for details.

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Online Gaming

PS PRETTY STRANGE

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BY SCOTT ALEXANDER

I FOUND A DUCK

DID YOU FIND A DUCK? DID IT HAVE A NUMber on it? Did that confuse you? This site can help. I Found a Duck unleashed 500 rubber ducks onto the streets of London. Their mission? Travel the world (which is where you come in). Once you find a duck, register it with the site, then release it back into the wild in a different location (perhaps 10 feet away, perhaps 10 time zones). At press time, one duck had migrated to Pakistan. **[www.ifoundaduck.com]**

WOMEN WITH BEARDS

FOR THE LONGEST TIME WE COULDN'T FIGURE OUT what all the hubbub was about over "sexy women" on the Internet. When we looked, all we could find were hideous, clean-shaven creatures. But we finally found a place where a red-blooded American male can ogle "beardettes" to his heart's content. And each model lists her attractions and turn-ons. For example, Anita's head is "like a monitor performing X-rated spectroscopy of the world," whereas Natasha is fascinated by "mass psychosis and religious insanity" as well as "men with beautiful upper arms and crooked teeth." Talk about your dream dates! **[www.dds.nl/~beards]**

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FOUNDED BY WILLIAM "WILLIAM" SCHLOCKman III in 1929, the W. Schlockman Corporation understands that packing peanuts are much more than padding for your fragile shippables: They're also a fashion statement. Schlockman's selection is unbeatable, whether you're shopping for a classic color (Original, Blue-ish) or from the designer line (Safari, Gulf War Nuts). Schlockman even stocks the hard-to-find Magical Glownuts peanut (available only in Texas and Montana). **[wschlockman.com]**

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"COMPLEX SOLUTIONS TO SIMPLE PROBLEMS" IS THE TAG LINE OF THE COMPANY THAT brought you Club MedFirst (the only all-inclusive vacation spot for hypochondriacs – featuring a swim-up pharmacy). You might also be surprised to learn that Dimbulb Inc. is the same company that produced the legendary *Unix for Eunuchs* manual. But is excellence in two fields reason to complain? Dimbulb's products and services don't disappoint. Its line of "Effing" products is dear to everyone's heart (surely references to your "Effing hammer" or "Effing computer" conjure familiar memories). **[dimbulb.com]**

SURVIVOR: MONSTER ISLAND

ADMIT IT, YOU DIDN'T REALLY CARE WHEN KIMMI GOT KICKED OFF. AND RICHARD'S TRIUMPH IN ROUND One left you yawning. At the end of the day, none of them could breathe fire or stomp one another to smithereens, and really, what else could top King Kong facing off against Mothra? Yes, we're much happier watching Survivor: Monster Island, thank you very much: Godzilla loses an immunity challenge spelling bee (*indefatigable* gets him every time), and Anguirus gets disqualified for trampling and attempting to devour Jeff Probst. Finally, some reality TV that lives up to its name. **[destroy-all-monsters.com/kaijusurvivor.shtml]**

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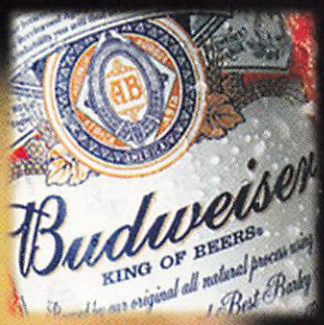

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